



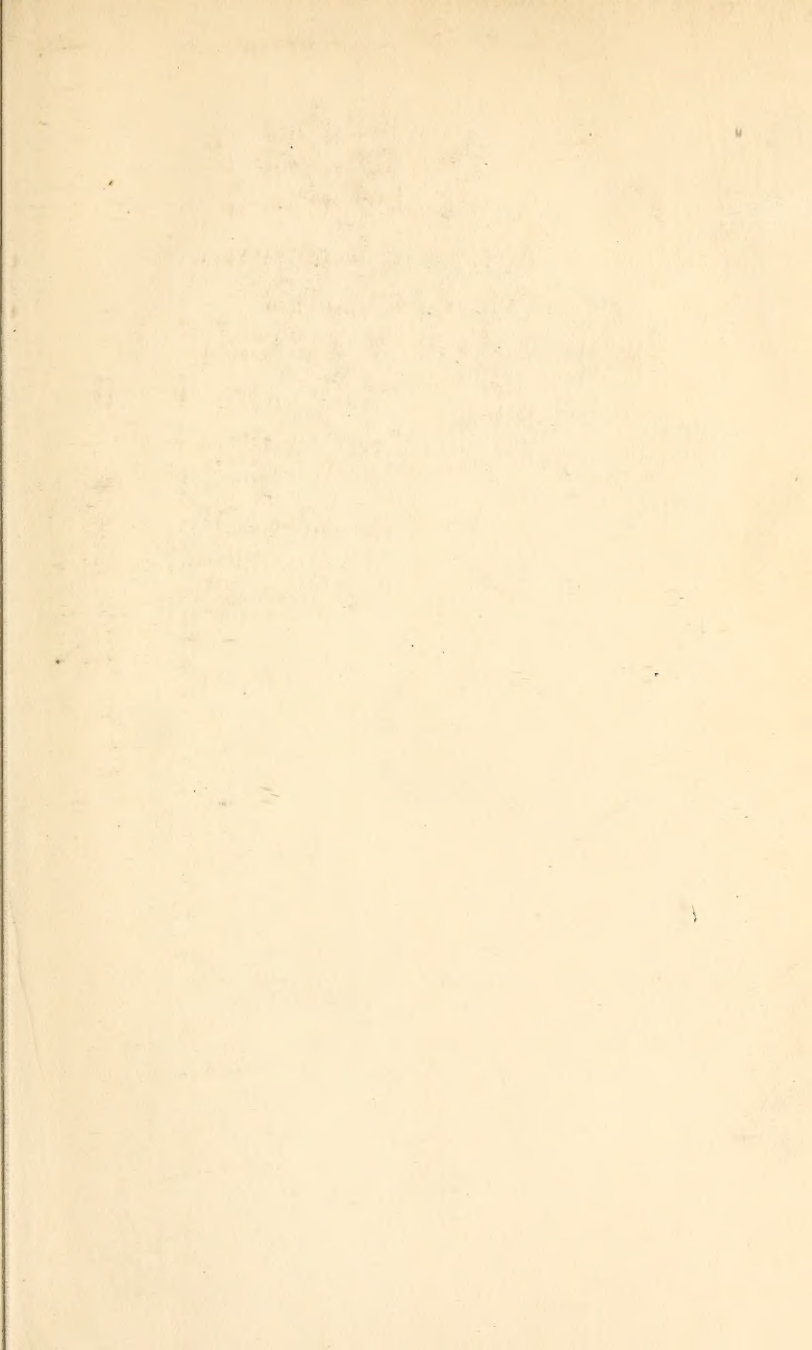
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MR WILLIAM JOHNSON  
&  
AUGUSTUS C. BUELL

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SIR WILLIAM  
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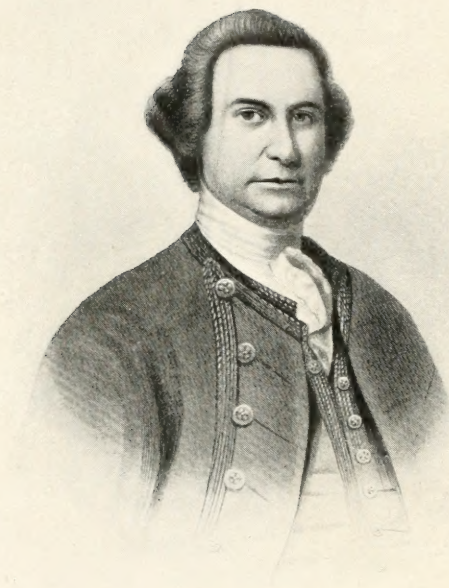
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SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON.

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# Sir William Johnson

BY

AUGUSTUS C. BUELL

Author of "Paul Jones, Founder of the  
American Navy"



*Illustrated*



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# SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON

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## CHAPTER I

### HIS EARLY LIFE IN IRELAND AND ON THE MOHAWK

1715-1748

THE year 1715 was epochal. It witnessed the end of one great chapter in the history of civilization and the beginning of a new one yet greater. The chapter that ended then was the one which embraced the stubborn and bloody dynastic wars that since 1672 had resulted from the collision between the stern, sullen genius of William of Orange and the reckless, unscrupulous ambition of Louis XIV. For forty-two years war had raged everywhere, broken only in its devastation by such brief and hollow truces as Nimwegen and Ryswick. True, William died in 1702, killed by the stumbling of his clumsy charger just at the threshold of a new campaign. But during the thirteen years of his reign as King of England he had built up a party of aggressive patriotism, which has since proved the

## Sir William Johnson

founder of the British Empire as we know it to-day.

For twelve years after William died, this party under the reign of a really great though rather indolent woman, Queen Anne, carried forward William's projects and executed his policies with no less vigor and, possibly, with even more success, than he himself could have done alive. I have seen the conflicts of William and Louis described in some histories as "religious wars." They were anything but that. They were dynastic and political wars. William may be called the inventor of the "balance of power." He was the originator of coalitions. The England that he took from the Stuarts in 1689 was an insular province near the coast of Europe. The England that he left to Queen Anne and John Churchill in 1702 was the prime factor in Europe, and the last vision that faded before his dying eyes was the dawn of the British Empire.

It is a strange fact that, with all her wealth of literature, England has no thorough history of her greatest modern king! A few great soldiers have been born to the purple since the dark ages—Gustav Adolf, Charles XII, Peter of Russia, and Frederic of Prussia. But no man of royal birth has ever combined the sol-

## His Early Life in Ireland

dier and the statesman as William did. It may, perhaps, be fortunate for England that the task of carrying William's statecraft into complete execution passed by legacy, as it were, from his hands into those of Marlborough; for the Great Duke was a greater man than even the Great King. And in all human probability the commander who won Blenheim and Malplaquet was a safer instrument of destiny than the king who lost Steenkerke and Neerwinden.

The year 1715 witnessed the end of Louis XIV's long and turbulent reign and the accession of Louis XV to the Bourbon throne under the regency of the able and dissolute but peaceful Duke of Orleans. It also marked the permanent solution of dynastic chaos in England by the installation of the sturdy, and, in the long run, conservative, House of Hanover.

But more important than any or all of these events, so far as the destinies of the Western Hemisphere were concerned, was the fact that in 1715 began a period of peace that lasted a generation, during which the Anglo-Saxon colonies along the Atlantic slope found opportunity for that development of resource and unity which, forty-five years later, enabled them to expel Latin power from

## Sir William Johnson

North America, and, sixty years after, to create our Republic.

It seems fittingly coincident that this epochal year of 1715 should have been the birth-date of a boy destined to play a colossal part in the new era then at its dawn. He was the son of Christopher Johnson and his wife, Anne Warren, and he first saw light at Warrenpoint, County Down, Ireland. I have seen in a so-called *Life of Sir William Johnson*, printed in Canada about sixty years ago, the statement that his father was "an obscure Irish schoolmaster, and a cripple!" It is possible that in his younger days Christopher Johnson may have taught school. But from 1692 till 1708 he was an officer in a regiment of heavy cavalry, then known as Cadogan's Horse—a regiment that has maintained continuous organization more than two hundred years, and is now the Fifth Regiment of Dragoon Guards in the British Army.

In 1715, when his son William was born, Mr. Johnson held the post of local magistrate for the bailiwick of Carlingford, to which he was appointed in 1709 as a reward for long and faithful service under King William and Marlborough. He was, indeed, "a cripple" at that time, as the Canadian biographer says. But his physical disability—a

## His Early Life in Ireland

bent and withered leg—was honorable, because it was due to a French bullet that hit him in the famous charge of Lord Cadogan's Cavalry Brigade at Oudenarde—a charge that needed only a Tennyson to make it immortal. Whether he was "obscure" or not is hardly worth discussion. At any rate, he held a social rank that enabled him to marry Anne Warren, daughter of a commodore and sister of an admiral in the British navy.

If there is anything congenital in the martial spirit, it may be that the wonderful military talents subsequently developed by William Johnson were transmitted to him from the loins of the veteran of the wars in Flanders, who could count his battles from Namur to Oudenarde. So when his young wife—"Mistress Nancy" as the society dialect of those days had it—presented a bouncing boy to the veteran of Flanders, the father named him after the old fighting king who had been his commander at Namur. Of William's childhood and youth there is scanty record. In May, 1726, his uncle, Admiral Warren, makes the following entry in his diary, or, as he called it, his "log ashore":

. . . Visiting me Mistress Nancy Johnson, with her Young Son, William, aged eleven. William is a Spritely Boy, well grown, of good parts, Keen



## Sir William Johnson

Wit but Most Onruly and Streperous! I see in him the Makings of a Strong Man. Shall keep my Wether Eye on this lad!

The importance of the old sea-dog's "wether eye" as a factor in his nephew's fortunes will appear later on.

When William was fourteen the usual family consultation was held to determine what should be done with him. The consensus of domestic opinion was that he should be what they called in those days "the King's Own." That meant either the army or the navy. But, to the amazement of every one, the youngster declared that he had made up his mind to study law and be a barrister. After some vain argument, the family acquiesced in the boy's choice, and he was sent to the ancient Academy of Newry, where he soon immersed himself in Latin conjugations and the Anabasis. It is not recorded that he was particularly apt. He grew rapidly, but his development of body seems to have outrun that of mind. At any rate, the "onruly and streperous" quality mentioned by his sailor uncle, at an earlier period, appears to have abided with him; because in his seventeenth year, or about the middle of his third year at the Academy, his curriculum ended suddenly in a peremptory expulsion.

## His Early Life in Ireland

The immediate cause of this was an attempt on the part of the Moderator to chastise him, which resulted in failure, disastrous to the pedagogue and dismal to young William. He was not only expelled from the school, but taken before a magistrate on a charge of aggravated assault and battery, fined seven guineas, and "put on the limits" for twenty-one days!

At the end of his period of detention young William returned to the paternal abode at Warrenpoint, only to encounter fresh trouble. Sixteen years' service with "the Army in Flanders" had made a martinet of 'Squire Christopher, and twenty-four years of local magistracy had imbued him with Spartan theories as to the majesty of law. Therefore, though his tall son William was unquestionably by long odds the physical superior of the old and crippled parent, the latter did not hesitate to subject him, upon his return home, to the kind of discipline in which the robust pedagogue had so signally failed.

This flagellation William endured with filial grace, doubtless on the principle that it did not hurt him much, and did the old gentleman a great deal of good.

The next three or four years of his life

## Sir William Johnson

were uneventful. He served for some time as magistrate's clerk in his father's office. But all the time he diligently read law and history. So apt a law-student was he and so able a preceptor did he find in a local barrister of the name of Byrne, his father's cousin, that he was listed for examination at the spring assizes in 1737 for admission as a junior barrister. But a month or two before the assizes met, an opportunity was offered to him which permanently turned the current of his life.

Some years prior to that time his uncle, Admiral Sir Peter Warren, had purchased, under royal grant, a large tract of land in the colony of New York, "scituate in the Valley of Mohock, west of the trading-post called Schenectady, and south of the river called Mohock." The settlements of the Palatine Germans and Holland Dutch were pushing up the valley of the Mohawk rapidly, under the benign influence of the long peace, so that by 1737 Sir Peter's land had acquired market value and was worth looking after. He therefore offered to his young nephew, then barely twenty-two years old, the chief stewardship of this estate, with the general agency of all his interests in America, and a power of attorney "to buy and sell or lease



SIR PETER WARREN.



## His Early Life in Ireland

real estate, to incur debts or pay demands, and in all respects to do all things in the name of Peter Warren, the same and with equal validity and binding force as if the said Peter Warren had done them with his own hand and under his own seal." That Admiral Warren had faith in the judgment and integrity of his erstwhile "most unruly and streperous" nephew may be inferred from the fact that this sweeping power of attorney was made to last "during the lifetime of the said William Johnson."

Joyfully accepting the great opportunity—which may, perhaps, be described as due to the keen vision of that "wether eye" the old sea-warrior had long ago determined to "keep on this lad"—young Johnson sailed late in the summer of 1737 from Dundalk to Bristol, and thence to New York, where he arrived in December of that year. His papers indicate that he spent the winter of 1737–38 in New York city, making plans and laying in supplies for active operations in his new field of duty early in the spring.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> During the winter of 1737–38 that young Johnson spent in New York city he was the guest of his aunt, Sir Peter Warren's wife. Lady Warren was Susan DeLancey, daughter of Stephen DeLancey, one of the richest merchants in New York, and the family held leadership in the most refined and aristocratic society of the colonial metropolis. In this select social

## Sir William Johnson

As soon as navigation was opened in the North River, in the spring of 1738, Johnson proceeded to Albany with a sloop-load of implements for subduing the forest, including a "set of mill-irons" and a "run of stone." He also took with him about half a dozen mechanics of various trades. From Albany the material for the new settlement was transported by land to a point on the south side of the Mohawk River, a short distance west of the mouth of Schoharie Creek, where he founded a settlement on his uncle's land. This settlement was then known as "Warrensbush" by the Dutch and "Warrensburg" by the English-speaking settlers, but it has long since disappeared from the map. Here young Johnson remained about five years, diligently improving his uncle's property by building mills, making roads, and clearing land; also by selling land in farm tracts and encouraging and aiding the settlers to clear it.

The young agent for Admiral Warren's estate in the forest soon found that its exact location was ill-defined and its boundaries

---

circle William bore himself with tact, dignity, and grace worthy of wider experience and maturer years, and in it he met many men whose interest and influence were vastly useful to him later on.



## His Early Life in Ireland

quite conjectural. However, this was usually true of kingly grants in the American wilderness during those days, and the problem was not considered formidable. At any rate, the particular point first occupied was not in dispute, and William Johnson began his task of subduing the forest with the tremendous energy and keen judgment that made him the colossal pioneer he proved to be.

Thus far I have referred to Warren as an admiral and a baronet. As a matter of fact, at the moment when William Johnson began operations in the Mohawk Valley his uncle, who owned the grant, was only senior captain or commodore of the British squadron on the North American station, his flagship being the 28-gun frigate *Squirrel*. He was, however, promoted to the rank of rear-admiral in 1739, vice-admiral in 1745, and was made a baronet. It may be worth while to remark here that Stone, in his generally accurate and admirable *Life of Sir William Johnson*, says that Admiral Sir Peter Warren was born in 1704. This may have been a typographical error. At any rate, the navy records of England show that Warren was rated a midshipman in 1706, commissioned a lieutenant in 1712, post-captain in 1724, and

## Sir William Johnson

was commodore on the North American station in 1737-38. In those days midshipmen were usually rated in the British navy at from twelve to fourteen years of age. While we have not been able to find the exact date of Admiral Warren's birth, it may be presumed that he was at least twelve years old in 1706 or ten in 1704. Instead of the latter date, Stone should, doubtless, have said 1694.

Young Johnson proceeded diligently to improve and develop his uncle's estate. Much of it was sold off in farms of from 150 to 300 acres, and settlement was rapid. Sir Peter had hoped to preserve the estate intact and rent its lands in long leases to tenants. But William soon advised him that the Dutch and Scotch-Irish settlers were averse to rentals and would take the land only in fee simple upon easy terms of payment. So, rather than let his grant remain an unproductive wilderness, Sir Peter reluctantly consented to sell his land, and in a few years the most of it had passed out of his hands, leaving him the possessor of a snug sum of money and a large fund of mortgages drawing a fair rate of interest. Sir Peter died in 1752, and then William Johnson acquired possession of such of his lands as remained unsold—probably about one-third of the original area.

## His Early Life in Ireland

From this time on, for the sake of convenience, I shall refer to Johnson as "Sir William," although he was not actually made a baronet until some years later.

Sir William passed five years at Warrensbush—1738–43. But he never intended to make it his permanent home, nor was he content with the occupation of agent for a landlord. He had not been at Warrensbush two years before he acquired by purchase a tract of several thousand acres, on part of which a portion of the city of Amsterdam now stands. This tract lay north of the Mohawk River, and Johnson acquired title to it in 1741. He at once began building a substantial stone house, known as "Fort Johnson" or "Mount Johnson," which is still standing, about a mile west of the corporate limits of Amsterdam. He also built a saw-mill and grist-mill on a water-power running through his lands. Sir Peter Warren heard of these operations and, being apprehensive that Sir William intended to give up the charge of his estate and set up in business for himself, wrote two or three rather severe letters to his nephew. The latter, however, assured his uncle that, whatever he might do on his own account, it would not in the least degree interfere with his care for the inter-

## Sir William Johnson

ests of the Warren estate, and ultimately pacified the admiral on that point.

Sir William's five years at Warrensbush were not eventful in any broad sense. But he made it a preparatory school for the great destiny that awaited him. Apart from the care of his uncle's estate and, after 1741, the development of his own on the north side of the river, he found time to learn, to a degree never surpassed and seldom if ever equaled by any white man, the character, ways, manners, modes of thinking, and the language of the Iroquois Indians.

He soon discovered that the management of Indian affairs, then conducted by a Board of Colonial Commissioners, was rotten to the core. There was no system whatever in the regulation of traffic between the whites and Indians. Any adventurer able to pay the small license fee required, or enjoying the favor of a commissioner, could obtain a permit without any inquiry whatever as to his antecedents, character, or responsibility. The result was that the Indian trade had fallen, almost without exception, into the hands of sordid, unprincipled sharpers, who never thought of an honest deal with any red man, but cheated and swindled the Indians at every turn.

## His Early Life in Ireland

About this time—1741—George Clinton, the father of General Sir Henry Clinton of the British Army, was appointed Colonial Governor of New York, though he did not actually take up the duties of the office until 1743. However, Sir William immediately began a correspondence with him, which became voluminous, so that by the time Governor Clinton assumed control, he had the benefit of Sir William's keen insight and thorough personal observation to guide him in the administration of Indian affairs, which had then become the most important element of executive responsibility in the colony of New York.

George Clinton was a veteran naval officer and at the time of his appointment to be Colonial Governor of New York held the rank of vice-admiral. His only previous experience in a civil capacity had been that of Governor of Newfoundland for eight or nine years; but that was a mere sinecure, as there were not more than a thousand white people in Newfoundland at that time, while the few hundred Micmac Indians living there took care of themselves and needed little or no attention. Hence, he was not in any wise prepared for the turmoil of faction and the subtlety of political intrigue that distracted the councils

## Sir William Johnson

of New York. Still, he held his post for ten years—1743–53—and whatever may have been his other administrative shortcomings, the management of the Indian Department during his term of office left nothing to be desired—simply because, as soon as he had authority to do so, he lodged the whole power and responsibility of that office in the hands of Sir William Johnson. Admiral Clinton and Admiral Warren were warm friends and had been shipmates. No doubt a good word or two at the proper moment from Warren had done much to anchor Sir William in Clinton's confidence.

The most important event in Sir William's five years' residence at Warrensbush had been his marriage with Miss Katharine Weisenburg in 1739. This young woman was the daughter of Jacob Weisenburg, a Lutheran clergyman, who had given her the rudiments of a fair education. But the family became impoverished, and Katharine was "bound out" as a servant when about fourteen years old to a Mr. Phillips, who lived near Warrensbush. Soon after he settled at the latter place, William Johnson saw this girl, fancied her, and "bought her indentures" from Mr. Phillips. This was in 1739, and as soon as she became "his property" by pur-



## His Early Life in Ireland

chase of her indentures, he married her; the ceremony, according to W. Max Reid, author of *The Mohawk Valley*, being performed by the Rev. Mr. Barclay, rector of Queen Anne's Chapel at Fort Hunter. She bore to Sir William three children: Anne, born 1740; John (afterward Sir John), born 1742; and Mary, born 1744.<sup>1</sup>

At length, in the early spring of 1743, the new stone mansion at Mount Johnson was completed, and Sir William transferred his family and household to it from the log house which had been his habitation at Warrensbush. Some idea of the tremendous energy of the man may be formed from the fact that during the two years of his possession of the Mount Johnson tract he had not only built on it a commodious and, for those times, elegant stone mansion, but had built a large dam, forming a valuable water-power, a sawmill capable of turning out 1,000 to 1,500 feet of lumber a day, and had laid the foundations of a flouring-mill, which was completed and in operation the following year (1744). But more than all that, he had, by means of hired

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<sup>1</sup> Some idea of the vicissitudes possible on that Old New York Frontier may be formed from the fact that a woman, destined to be the wife of one baronet of England and the mother of another, was a "bound servant" at fourteen, and that her husband had to buy her before he could marry her.



## Sir William Johnson

labor in a colony where it was difficult to induce men to work for wages, cleared and made ready for cultivation nearly 500 acres of the most fertile land to be found anywhere in the great "Mohawk Flats."

Much of this force of laborers he had brought over himself from the County Down, where his father acted as his employment-agent. During the year 1741 about sixty families came over—sturdy Scotch-Irish like himself. He paid all their expenses and had comfortable log houses prepared for their reception when they arrived. In accordance with the custom of those days, these immigrants came as "bound servants," but upon arrival they were immediately released from their indentures by Sir William, and lands belonging to his estate were allotted to them by long leases for nominal rental, which they paid in labor, or, as the saying was, "worked out."

This policy Sir William followed for many years, until he had gathered about him a numerous clan of frontier yeomanry as loyal to him as were ever the retainers of a feudal baron. On one occasion, hearing that a considerable number of German refugees had sailed from a port in Holland bound for New York, he arranged with his brother, Warren



FORT JOHNSON, NEAR AMSTERDAM, N. Y.

From a recent photograph.



## His Early Life in Ireland

Johnson, an officer in the British navy, then on shore duty in New York as keeper of the king's magazines, to meet them upon their arrival and persuade them to come to the Mohawk Valley and settle upon his estate. Captain Johnson succeeded, and the entire little colony, numbering about 160 souls, settled upon the extension of Sir William's estate, commonly known as the Johnstown tract. Besides all these vast undertakings—vast, indeed, for their times and conditions—Sir William established, in 1744, a trading-post at Oquawgo or Oghwaga, an Indian village on the Susquehanna, at the foot of the mountain from which it derived its name. Its location was near the present site of the village of Windsor, Broome County, N. Y., and about five or six miles below it on the river was the principal village of the remnant of the Tuscaroras, who had been adopted into the Iroquois Confederacy.

Oquawgo, which lay more than one hundred miles south of Sir William's home, was then an Indian village of about one hundred lodges, many of which were quite commodious habitations built of logs or of poles covered and roofed with bark, having fireplaces with chimneys, and otherwise far beyond the average aboriginal abode in the

## Sir William Johnson

essentials of decency and comfort. The population of this village was made up of people from every tribe of the Iroquois, and at the time of which I now write (1744) it had acquired a status of its own, having existed more than two hundred years, and its denizens were currently designated as a sort of tribe or clan by themselves, distinctive enough to cause them to be spoken of in most histories of the time and place as the "Oquawgo" (or "Oghwaga") Indians.

The name has been spelled in a great variety of ways. The author has adopted the orthography of his great-grandfather, Simon Buell, who came from Dutchess County shortly after the Revolution and settled close to the then nearly deserted Indian village, a part of his farm being land that had been cleared and cultivated by the Indians long before. Joseph Brant, in his correspondence and papers, always spelled it "Oghwaga," and maybe he was a better authority on Iroquois orthography than Simon Buell. However, in any future reference to the place I shall use the form "Oquawgo."

The trading-post which Sir William founded there in 1744 was built on the bank of the river opposite the Indian village and just abreast of the lower end of an island

## His Early Life in Ireland

which, from the profusion of apple-trees growing on it, was known to the older settlers as Indian Orchard. When Sir William proposed to establish this post, which was within the jurisdiction of the Oneida tribe, the chief of the southern district of that clan, Antone, gave him about a square mile of land in connection with it. The trading-post was a log blockhouse about  $36 \times 24$  feet on the ground, with a second story projecting 2 feet all round, or  $40 \times 28$  feet. It was surrounded by a palisade of logs placed upright some 10 feet high, with an open space of about 60 feet all round between it and the building. The enclosure contained a small but never-failing spring, so that, if besieged, the garrison of the post would have no trouble on the score of water-supply. After the conquest of Canada the palisade was taken away, and the blockhouse itself was burned by Colonel William Butler's Rangers (Americans) in 1778.

The site for the post was selected and the blockhouse built by Ezra Buell, Sr.,<sup>1</sup> a surveyor from Dutchess County, who was in Sir

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<sup>1</sup> This Ezra Buell had a nephew, also named Ezra, who figured during the Revolution as a lieutenant in Morgan's Riflemen until 1778, and after that until 1783 as a captain in the Third New York Continentals.



## Sir William Johnson

William's employ for many years; his last service of any note having been to assist Simon Metcalf in running and marking the Fort Stanwix treaty line in 1769. When the post was established, Sir William requested Ezra Buell to manage it until he could find a competent man to be permanent agent.<sup>1</sup> This search seems to have lasted three years, because it was not until 1747 that Buell was relieved by John Butler—afterward notorious in the Tory annals of the Mohawk Valley. In the meantime the post had developed a great and thriving trade, which it continued to enjoy until the outbreak of the Revolution.

Sir William, when he applied to the Colonial Governor for a license, said: "I wish to create this trading-post not any more for the profits it may bring to me than to show by actual example that trade with the Indians can be conducted honestly as well as any other commercial business!"

The sequel soon proved that the Indians know as well as anybody when they are fairly dealt with. Sir William's honest trading-post at Oquawgo within five years drove out of business the horde of rascals who, from

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<sup>1</sup> During this period Ezra took unto himself a pretty Tuscarora girl, with whom he lived happily for many years. He died near Kingston, on the Hudson, in 1807, aged eighty-nine.



## His Early Life in Ireland

the beginning of Indian traffic, had been robbing the red men of the Susquehanna Valley, right and left.

Necessarily considerable capital was required to carry on such a tremendous volume of business. This was supplied mainly by Admiral Warren and the rest by Stephen and James DeLancey, who had taken a warm fancy to the stalwart and indefatigable young Scotch-Irishman. The rates of interest were low, and were paid, in the main, by percentage on profits. But few years elapsed, however, before the growth of Sir William's own fortune enabled him to discharge the principal of the loans from his Uncle Warren and the DeLanceys, and thereafter he was abundantly able to "go it alone."

Admiral Warren's ability to "finance" his ambitious nephew may be inferred from a letter written to Sir William by his brother, Captain Warren Johnson, under date of "New York, September 13, 1747." The material part of it is as follows:

Last evening I arrived here from Louisburg with my ship, which is in need of repairs, and I am to go to England in the Scarborough frigate, there to get a new command. My rank now entitles me to a first-class frigate, in which I will have much better opportunities than in the 20-gun ship I have

## Sir William Johnson

commanded these two years past. I have had no chance of independent cruising, having been all the time either with the fleet as despatch-vessel or on convoy. The result is that, excepting what share may fall to me as prize from the taking of Louisbourg and the St. Domingo fleet, the words "prize-money" have an empty sound for me.

I would much like to go up to Mount Johnson and see you. But the Scarborough sails too soon to permit making the journey and returning in time, and, besides, the first thing Aunt Susan (Mrs. Admiral Warren) told me when I arrived at her house was that you are now out among the Western Iroquois counteracting the intrigues of the French Papists and arranging for a contingent of warriors for the grand movement<sup>1</sup> to be carried out next spring.

So nothing is left for me but to go to England without seeing you.

I make no doubt you have heard of our Uncle Warren's great successes in his two cruises; the first as second-in-command to Admiral Anson and the second with a squadron of which he was commander-in-chief, part of which fell in with the Santo Domingo fleet, home bound with full cargoes,

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<sup>1</sup> The "grand movement" referred to was the proposed reduction of Crown Point and invasion of Canada by way of Lake Champlain early the next spring. It will be noted that Captain Warren Johnson spoke of it in the vaguest possible terms. His letter might, he thought, by some mishap fall into the hands of the French.

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and took sixty-two sail of them. He had taken several rich ships before. He must now be one of the richest men in England, and not one has done his country better service. He must be worth four hundred thousand pounds sterling. He is now Vice-Admiral of the White and member of Parliament for Westminster; and I have no doubt in a very short time he will be a peer of England.

With his removal from Warrensbush to Mount Johnson in the early spring of 1743 the active and effective public career of Sir William Johnson may be said to have begun. Prior to that time his connection with public affairs had been limited to correspondence with Governor Clinton on the Indian question, and with the Colonial Chief-Justice, James DeLancey, in regard to the confusion of land-titles in the Mohawk Valley, both of which were then prime objects of public attention.

His first notable appearance in public affairs was his appointment by Chief-Justice DeLancey as master or referee in a land litigation between George Klock and Peter Van Braam of Canajoharie, involving a considerable tract north of the Mohawk River, where, by the vagueness of their terms, two purchases of land from the Indians appeared to overlap each other. Upon this issue he

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brought to bear his knowledge of the Iroquois tongue, and personally examined a number of Indian witnesses without an interpreter. In fact, after about 1740, he never used an interpreter in his dealings with the Indians, but often acted as such himself at conferences between the Governor and delegations of chiefs at Albany. His report in this case was prepared with such ability and precision as to elicit the outspoken admiration of Judge DeLancey, who approved it.

Late in the fall of 1743 the venerable Colonel Peter Schuyler resigned from the Board of Indian Commissioners, and Governor Clinton at once invited Sir William to fill the vacancy. The Board consisted of five members, one of whom must, by the law then prevailing, be a minister of the Gospel. At the time under consideration the clerical member of the Board was a clergyman of the Church of England whose pastorate was in New York city, who knew little or nothing about Indian affairs, and paid little or no attention to the duties of his office. He was willing to resign, and Sir William recommended that his resignation be accepted. In his place he advised the Governor to appoint the Rev. Jacob Weisenburg, a Lutheran minister of Schenectady, and the father of his

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wife. Mr. Weisenburg had lived among the Indians ever since his arrival in this country, early in the eighteenth century, had converted many of them, was familiar with their traits, and was much beloved by them. This was done. Not long afterward another member of the Board resigned, and, to fill his place, Sir William recommended the Rev. Mr. Van Ness, a Dutch Reformed pastor of Albany, whom Governor Clinton at once appointed.

He now had a majority of three to two on the Board on any or all of the three prime questions involved in the Indian problem: First, he was sure that the ministers of the Gospel—one representing the Holland Dutch and the other the Palatines—would stand by him in the determined effort he intended making to break up the liquor traffic with the Indians. Second, he knew that the reverend gentlemen could not possibly have any connection with the rascally traders or their interests, and would sustain him in his efforts to compel honest dealing with the red men. And, third, he took it for granted that they would joyfully back him up in his scheme to organize Protestant missions and mission schools throughout the Iroquois Confederacy, which he considered the only effective means of counteracting the intrigues and influence

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of the Canadian French Jesuits, who for many years had been proselyting among the Six Nations—particularly the two western tribes, the Cayugas and the Senecas.

His anticipations in these directions proved well founded. The laws against selling liquor to the Indians were rigidly, and in some cases drastically, enforced—to such an extent that, according to the manuscript journal of William Sammons, corroborated by the papers of the Rev. John Barclay, a missionary, there were at one time twenty-six culprits in the Albany jail serving various terms of imprisonment for violation of the Indian anti-liquor law. Also during the period between 1743 and 1746 a majority of the trading-licenses previously granted had been revoked and annulled by the Governor on recommendation of the Board, and in three or four of the most flagrant cases of fraud and swindling, prosecutions had been instituted by the Attorney-General or King's Counsel for the Colony. Besides these things, Sir William's pet policy of founding numerous missions and mission schools among the tribes was adopted and an appropriation was made by the Colonial Assembly to aid them.

In fact, it may be said that, supported as



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he invariably was by his two clerical henchmen, Sir William soon became to all intents and purposes not only the president of the Board, but the Board itself. His idea of the value of Christianity as an agency of civilization among the Indians may be inferred from a passage in a letter he wrote to Governor Clinton in 1744, in which he said:

You can make a pretty good and generally faithful fellow of an Indian by simply treating him fairly in business matters and helping him along now and then when his natural indolence or improvidence or bad luck has brought him to straits. But you can never completely depend on him or overcome the inherent fickleness of his nature until you have made a Christian of him and brought him thereby under that sense of personal responsibility not only to men, but to the Almighty, that religion teaches. Either in war or in peace, one Christian Indian is always worth two heathen ones!

From 1743 to 1746 Sir William, whose public duties did not take up more than a moiety of his time, continued to improve his estate and extend his commercial operations with unflagging energy. Notwithstanding that, in addition to his duties in connection with the Indian Commission, he was appointed colonel of the militia regiment for



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the western district of Albany County in 1744, and king's magistrate for the same district in April, 1745, he still found time to transact his great and rapidly growing private business.

About this time he came to the conclusion that the live stock of the Mohawk Valley needed improvement, and to that end imported from England a considerable breeding stud of horses, together with a number of cattle and sheep. His papers and accounts indicate that he imported about thirty horses, thirty or forty head of cattle, and a hundred or more sheep. He selected the Irish hunter as the most available breed of horses for Colonial use in general, though in the accounts of his importations four Suffolk stallions appear. These, of course, were intended to improve the breed of draft-horses by crossing with the native mares. The cattle he imported came from Devonshire and Hereford. The sheep were English-bred Spanish merinos—a breed producing an exceeding fine wool. These importations were made from time to time in small lots during a period of three or four years. To his tenants he gave the services of his breeding animals free, and to his neighbors in general for a nominal consideration, in view of

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the outlay he had incurred in importing them. So rapidly did his agricultural operations grow that by 1746 he began shipping flour to the West Indies in considerable quantity.

All the time he continued clearing land at the rate of from 250 to 300 acres a year, so that by the end of the year 1746 he had about 1,200 acres under his own cultivation, besides the large areas cleared and brought into tillage by his tenants, who now numbered over a hundred. Up to this time Sir William had not held any slaves, but in 1747 an estate in Dutchess County was sold at administrator's sale, in partition. This estate included nineteen slaves. Sir William bought the lot entire, though only about ten or eleven of them were able-bodied men or women, the rest being aged and infirm, or children. The men he employed chiefly in taking care of his horses and other live stock, while the women were occupied in his household. He provided comfortable cabins for them, and according to all accounts he was an easy master. He ultimately became the largest slaveholder in the colony of New York, possessing between sixty and seventy.

During this period the War of the Austrian Succession raged in Europe, but its effect in America did not begin to be felt to

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any serious degree until 1745; and even then there were no great operations in the interior of the country. About all that occurred were raids by small parties against outlying settlements or posts. In 1746 an effort was made to combine the provincial forces of New England, New York, and Pennsylvania with a force of British regulars, for the reduction of Crown Point and an invasion of Canada by way of Lake Champlain. But the colonies could not reach an agreement as to quotas of men and proportions of money to be furnished. The British Government did not seem disposed to employ its regular troops in such an enterprise—in fact, the military operations of the English on the continent of Europe absorbed all the troops they had available, and the colonial garrisons were depleted rather than reenforced. The colonists, accordingly, during this struggle—which, in America, was known as “King George’s War”—were left almost wholly to their own resources.

The only great event in America was the siege and capture of the French fortress of Louisburg on Cape Breton Island by a combined military and naval force, the troops being all Provincials except one company of regular sappers and miners and two compa-

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nies of infantry. The fleet was commanded by Admiral Sir Peter Warren and the land forces by Colonel Sir William Pepperell of Massachusetts.<sup>1</sup> All the Provincial troops were furnished by the New England colonies, and though a contingent was to have been provided by New York, its organization was not completed in time to sail with the expedition. The taking of Louisburg was an exceedingly brilliant affair and reflected great credit upon the Provincial troops engaged in it. They were, of course, powerfully and decisively aided by Admiral Warren's fleet, which not only cut off and captured the French ships that tried to bring reenforcements and supplies to the garrison, but participated effectively in the bombardments. Finding that the Provincial volunteers were not highly expert in the use of heavy siege-guns, Admiral Warren landed a force of blue-jackets sufficient to work them. This landing force was commanded by Captain Warren Johnson of the 20-gun ship *Avon*, and brother of Sir William. The terms of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle restored Louisburg to France,

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<sup>1</sup> Pepperell was a native and resident of Kittery, in the present State of Maine—and Maine now claims him. But it was part of Massachusetts then, and for that reason I speak of Pepperell as "of Massachusetts."

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to the bitter disgust of the colonies, particularly New England.

During the fall of 1747 a substantial agreement was reached between New England, New York, and New Jersey to invade Canada by way of Lake Champlain early in the spring of 1748. The quotas of men and money were agreed upon by commissioners appointed from each colony. Pennsylvania did not undertake to furnish a quota of men, but agreed to bear a share of the financial burdens. No attempt was made to enlist the cooperation of any colony south of Pennsylvania. The British Government was to furnish a siege-train with regular artillerists and two regiments of regular infantry. Sir William Johnson's share in this proposed enterprise was to have been an important one. In September, 1746, the Governor had abolished the Indian Board and appointed Sir William sole Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the colony of New York. This action of Governor Clinton had been confirmed by royal warrant, and Sir William was commissioned a colonel on the permanent establishment. The practical effect of this action was to take the control of Indian affairs out of the hands of the Assembly and vest it in an officer of the Crown, responsible directly to the king.

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It was a bold step, but a logical one, and based upon the views Sir William had frequently expressed both in his correspondence with the Governor and in Council.

Sir William held that the Indians could not rightfully be held as under the jurisdiction of the Colonial Government, that they had thus far been so held by sufferance, or because no one had taken sufficient interest in them to assert their rights for them—which they could not do or did not know how to do themselves. He held that they had a government of their own, that they were not citizens, and that they were unrepresented in the body that legislated for them. This status, he argued, made them the wards of the king individually, and that their government was under the protection of the king.

As I have already remarked, the abolishment of the Board and the appointment of Sir William as sole superintendent, with military rank as an officer of the Crown, carried this theory into effect in fact, if not in name; and so long as the Colonial condition lasted, after that the relation was never changed, nor was attempt made to change it except in one instance, which will be noted later on. This somewhat detailed description of Sir William's status at the time under consideration



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seems requisite to a clear understanding of his relation to the proposed expedition against Canada in the spring of 1748. He was to have command of a division composed of a brigade of Provincial troops under his own immediate command, and a thousand Indians to be commanded by Hendrick. And he was also to be second in command of the entire force, Sir William Pepperell having been selected for the command-in-chief. During the autumn of 1747 all arrangements were made to mobilize a force at least nine thousand strong, with a reserve of five thousand. The Iroquois had agreed to furnish not less than a thousand picked warriors. It was noted that the Senecas now, for the first time since the alliance between the English and the Six Nations was ratified, in 1710, displayed zeal and responded to the call for men with alacrity.

As an indication of the thoroughness with which this proposed invasion had been planned, it is worth while to observe that the scheme of preparation involved not only the mobilization of fourteen thousand troops in the early spring, but also provision for taking control of Lake Champlain. Three stout sloops were to be built during the winter at a convenient point near the south end of the

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lake. These sloops were designed to carry one long 12-pounder each on a pivot amidships, and two swivels. In fact, at the time when the communication of the Duke of Newcastle reached Albany, considerable timber for the construction of these sloops had already been cut, and some of it shaped for use. As the French had no naval force whatever on the lake, it was estimated that these sloops could command its waters long enough to ensure the reduction of Crown Point, because, if the French had gunboats in the St. Lawrence of dimensions capable of passing the Sorel River, the ice would not be out before May, and it was confidently expected that Crown Point must fall before the end of April.

It was now considered that all requisite preparations for the spring campaign had been completed, when a communication was received from the Duke of Newcastle, then Prime Minister. In this communication the duke, in the name of the king, warmly approved the zeal and fidelity of the colonists, commended their preparations, and congratulated them upon their apparent unity of design. But he intimated that events were in progress in Europe which would be likely to render the proposed expedition unnecessary.

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In those circumstances and in the interest of economy, the king had directed that the troops already assembled and ready to go into winter quarters at and about Albany be furloughed until April, retaining only a force of Provincials and Indians sufficient to guard the northern frontier. This action disappointed the white troops who had volunteered with so much alacrity, and it almost disheartened the Indians. But by liberal distribution of presents, as they started for their home, Sir William managed to allay in great measure their discontent.

There were about six hundred Indians in their camp near Cohoes and at Schaghticoke, and additional recruits were coming in every day. As all these men had been kept from their usual fall hunt, there was considerable destitution among the tribes during the winter, which, however, proved to be short and mild. The Assembly voted considerable sums to relieve them as far as possible. This was practically the end of "King George's War," so far as the colonies were concerned. The frontier, however, was strongly guarded during the winter, and in February, 1748, at the solicitation of the Governor, Sir William took command of the whole line of frontier defense, and held it until the peace of Aix-la-

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Chapelle was promulgated. But no military event of moment occurred within the limits of his command during the winter or the ensuing spring.

By April, 1748, it became generally known that the war was practically over, and though the definitive peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was not promulgated until October of that year, a virtual armistice prevailed during the summer, both in Europe and America. The frontier defenses were considerably strengthened as spring opened, but there was no movement on either side. The French did not come south of Crown Point—which was their most advanced post—while the northern outpost of the Provincials was at the head or south end of Lake George, where Sir William had his field headquarters. During the spring and summer of 1748 the frontier force of the Provincials was about three thousand, including some four hundred Iroquois. The Provincials were quartered in four or five camps within easy supporting distance; some at the head of Lake George, some at the head of Lake Champlain, and others at Saratoga, Glens Falls, or where Fort Edward was afterward built, and the remainder at Fort Anne. The Indians remained at Schaghticoke and Cohoes.

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The French had twelve hundred men—about half of them regulars—at Crown Point, and a large reserve of Canadian militia and Indians at Isle aux Noix. In this manner the two belligerents faced each other quietly during the summer of 1748. Sir William was, however, by no means idle personally during this interim. The abortive attempts that had been made in 1745, '46 and '47 to mobilize the Provincial forces of New York quickly had shown that the militia of Albany County was in a state of utter disorganization. Albany County at that time embraced the whole of New York Colony north and west of Dutchess and Ulster counties, together with the present State of Vermont. While this vast county was, on the whole, sparsely populated, the fact that it embodied the whole northern and western frontier open to invasion from Canada, made its militia organization of paramount importance. In June, 1748, as soon as he was sure that there would be no more hostilities, Governor Clinton appointed Sir William colonel-in-chief of the Albany County militia, with directions to reorganize it on his own plan *carte blanche*. "You may consider whatever you recommend as done," said the Governor in a personal letter accompanying the appointment and instructions. Sir Will-

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iam thereupon proceeded with his task and effected a new organization, which stood the test of the next war, 1755-62, and lasted until the Revolution. The basis of this reorganization was regimental in the more populous districts, such as the valleys of the Hudson and the lower Mohawk, and independent companies in the sparsely settled outlying districts. Its result was the creation of five regiments of eight companies each, having a normal strength of seventy-five to the company, or six hundred to the regiment, and twelve independent companies of from sixty to seventy-five men each.

In July advices were received that the preliminary articles of peace were signed, and the frontier defense force was disbanded. The French evacuated Crown Point and the Indians on both sides buried the hatchet. During his command of the frontier defenses Sir William made two permanent improvements: he built through the forest a road practicable for supply wagons and artillery from the head of Lake George to Glens Falls on the Hudson, and another from the head of Lake Champlain, at Black Mountain, to Fort Anne, which was already connected with Sandy Hill on the Hudson by a practicable road. The Governor now appointed him



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permanent colonel-in-chief of the Albany County militia, and he returned to his home at Mount Johnson, having, as he said, "done a deal of hard work for two years with mighty little to show for it."

On the whole, "King George's War," so far as the colonies were concerned, was an abortive affair. Except the brilliant exploit of taking Louisburg, there had been no action whatever worth mention in history. A few raids back and forth by the French and Indians on one side and Provincial backwoodsmen and Iroquois on the other; some cabins burned, several murders, and a few scalps, told the whole story for the interior frontier. But it served to teach the colonies lessons which proved of great value in the final and decisive struggle for empire in North America that was then only seven years distant. Those lessons were: first, the absolute need of unity in design and harmony in execution; second, that their situation required in peace a constant preparedness for instant war; and, third, that the balance of power on the northern frontier between the colonies and the French power in Canada was held by the Six Nations, and he who possessed influence to hold them loyal was the most important man in the colony.

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And this war, desultory as it may have been, had demonstrated beyond dispute or doubt that that man was Sir William Johnson.

We have seen one good description of Sir William himself and his household. A little later than this (in 1751) Mrs. Julia Grant, the wife of Captain (afterward Major-General) Grant of the British Army, then in command of the small garrison of regulars at Albany, visited Mount Johnson and painted a portrait of Sir William. The lady was an artist of no mediocre ability, and during her eight years' sojourn on the New York frontier painted many clever portraits of distinguished people, including Colonel and Mrs. Schuyler, Solomon Van Rensselaer and others. She also kept a vivacious journal, which was afterward printed in Edinburgh. In this journal Lady Grant pen-pictures Sir William as follows:

. . . A little scant of six feet high—say five feet eleven and one-half inches. Neck massive, shoulders broad, chest deep and full, limbs large and showing every sign of great physical strength. Head large and finely shaped. Countenance open, frank, and always beaming with good-nature and humor—a real Irishman as he is for wit. Eyes large, a sort of black-gray or grayish black in color. Hair dark brown with a tinge of auburn in certain

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lights. In conversation, he is a most delightful person, relating recollections of his dealings with the Indians or discussing the classic authors or the literature of the day with equal readiness and ease. His mode of living is that of an English gentleman at his country seat, and I was astonished to find on this remote frontier, almost in the shade of primeval forest, a table loaded with delicacies and Madeiras, ports and Burgundies of the rarest vintage. His table is seldom without guests, and his hospitality is a byword the region round. During my stay he had Indian chiefs to dine with him several times. Their attire was the same as white people, and for the most part they conversed in English. This disappointed me, because I wished to sit at table with genuine Indians in blankets and leggings and talking nothing but their gibberish through an interpreter. Among those I met at Colonel Johnson's table were the venerable and noble-looking old chief Hendrick, now over seventy years of age; his brother Abraham, about sixty years of age, chief of a Mohawk clan and father of Caroline, the beautiful young Indian woman who is the mistress of his household; also Nicklaus Brant, chief of the Upper Castle Mohawks, a man of prodigious silence and the most grave and solemn courtesy. . .

Colonel Johnson is the soul of method. At breakfast I tell him I wish a half-hour's sitting some time in the day. We agree on an exact time by the clock. The Colonel then mounts his horse

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and dashes here and there about his estate over-seeing everything. At the appointed moment he dismounts at the door and is ready for the sitting. When the half hour is done he is away again as swiftly as he came. He must have fifty or sixty people in his employ besides the negroes and he oversees everything that they do. Marvellous! And then he attends to a mass of complicated public business besides!

## CHAPTER II

### DOMESTIC LIFE AND THE ALBANY

#### CONGRESS

1745-1754

WE may now turn briefly from the public to the private side of Sir William Johnson's life. Late in 1745 his white wife, Katharine, died suddenly, leaving him with three little children—Anne, five years old; John, three; and Mary, a baby one year old.<sup>1</sup> At first he

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<sup>1</sup> Parkman, in his *Montcalm and Wolfe* (vol. i, p. 298), briefly surveys the character of Sir William Johnson from the Boston point of view. Its tone is half-cynical, half-patronizing, and it may be left without comment so far as Sir William is concerned. But in the course of it he goes clear out of his way to cast a slur upon the memory of Katharine Weisenburg, who, though an unpretentious Mohawk Dutch girl, was an honorable woman, a faithful wife, and a devoted mother. After a brief description of Mount Johnson he says: "Here presided for many years a Dutch or German wench whom he (Sir William) finally married."

This is not only a painfully ill-natured but a grossly inaccurate statement. Johnson married Katharine Weisenburg within a week after he had bought her indentures from Mr. Phillips, as previously related; and she never "presided" at Mount Johnson except as his wife. Whether she was a

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employed as nurse for them a worthy woman to whom history has given no more intimate recognition than the remark that she was a "Dutch widow." She was undoubtedly a faithful nurse, but Sir William soon detected that his little daughter Anne and his little son John, who were just beginning to talk, rapidly acquired the Mohawk Dutch "brogue" of their nurse. This he did not desire. So he found other employment in his establishment

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"wench" or not may be a question of lexicography as between Boston and the rest of mankind. The fact is that, in this silly slur upon the memory of a good woman, Parkman betrays the besetting weakness that mars in many places the results of his wonderful research and often besmears the general purity of his style. That weakness was his inexorable prejudice and incorrigible bias in favor of everything and everybody of Massachusetts and against everything and everybody everywhere else. The reader of Parkman and Parkman alone would imagine that Massachusetts, almost single-handed, sustained the brunt of all the French and Indian wars, and finally, with some trifling assistance from the British navy and a few English regulars, drove the French out of North America! As for the other colonies, they simply looked on. Their men, most of whom were "boors," cut little or no figure in the contest, and their women were mainly "wenches."

In Sir William's case the grudge was personal. Massachusetts, who furnished the largest contingent both of men and supplies for the campaign of 1755, bitterly resented the appointment of a New Yorker to the supreme command. Her people considered Colonel (afterward General) Phineas Lyman entitled to the leadership. Parkman simply inherited the local spite and jealousy of his province.



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for the good Dutch woman, and secured the services of a middle-aged Scotch-Irish woman, the widow of a non-conformist minister of New York city, whom Lady Warren found available and sent to him. This lady proved an ideal nursery-governess, because she was not only a capable nurse, but a well-educated woman besides, and able to instruct the children as well as to care for them. The name of this lady was Mrs. Barclay (also spelled "Barkley" in some of the manuscripts), and she passed the rest of her life under the Johnson roof. Sir William now remained in single blessedness about two years, beset by match-makers, from his aunt, Lady Warren, in New York, to his aristocratic friends in Albany. But in the fall of 1747 he astonished all his friends.

One of his biographers—and by far the best of them in a general sense—writing of the events of the year 1748, says (Stone, p. 327, vol. i):

It was about this period—though I have not been able to learn the exact date—that Colonel Johnson employed as his housekeeper Mary Brant, or "Miss Molly" as she was called, a sister of the celebrated Chief Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant), with whom he lived until his decease, and by whom he had several children.

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In the Brant manuscripts the statement is made by the chief that he was born in 1742, and that his sister Mary was "nearly seven years his senior." This would have brought the date of Mary's birth in the year 1735, and she would therefore have been in her thirteenth year in 1748—an age hardly ripe enough for the domestic responsibilities of such an establishment as that of Sir William. However, "about this time"—that is to say, late in 1747—he did employ a young Indian woman as his housekeeper; but she was not Mary Brant, who, by the way, did not achieve that distinction until about six years later.

This young woman was a daughter of the Chief Abraham, sachem of the Lower Castle Mohawks, and when she attracted the attention of Sir William was about twenty-two years old. She was reputed to be the handsomest girl in the Iroquois nation. Indeed, there is, or used to be, among the older residents of the Mohawk Valley a tradition that Abraham's wife was a white woman of Holland Dutch antecedents. If so, this girl was a half-breed. And, more important than that, if the legend be true, her elder sister, who married Nicklaus Brant and became the mother of Joseph and Mary, was a half-breed also, which would put a strain of white blood

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in the veins of the great captain—unquestionably the greatest of American Indians. I do not believe this tradition. Chief Abraham's wife may have been an unusually light-colored Indian woman. The Iroquois were universally lighter in complexion than any other American Indians, and the Mohawks and Oneidas were the lightest of all. So marked was this peculiarity, taken together with their superior civilization, that some of the early writers—mainly Jesuit Fathers—considered them a different race from the common aborigines.

A noted student of Indian life and character, Professor Donaldson, explains it on purely physical grounds, which is doubtless the true view. He says that for generations—even before the white man was known on these shores—the Iroquois had lived in comfortable habitations, tilled the soil, raised grain and fruits, and, generally speaking, had much better shelter, better cookery, better sanitary arrangements, and altogether more of the good things of life than any other Indians. This mode of living had tended to “bleach out” their complexions and endow them with other physical advantages of which for centuries they had availed themselves to gain an ascendancy among Indian nations that

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finally came to be undisputed. We may, therefore, take it for granted that Chief Abraham's wife was simply unusually white even for a Mohawk woman, but a full-blooded Indian nevertheless.

The girl who placed herself under Sir William's protection was, like all the Hendrick family, Christianized. She had been baptized under the name of Caroline, and had received as complete an education as the mission school at Fort Hunter and a private school in Schenectady could impart. The relation she so willingly assumed to Sir William may seem equivocal in the lights of our time; but whether there was any marriage ceremony or not, it was a case of unconcealed cohabitation, accompanied by child-bearing, which, after all, under the statutes of those days, amounted to a common-law marriage.

At this point the view adopted by W. Max Reid of Amsterdam, N. Y., author of a most excellent History of the Mohawk Valley, is of interest. It may be premised that Mr. Reid is more thoroughly conversant with the history, legends, and traditions of the Mohawk Valley than any other man now living, and probably more so than any other man ever was, except Horatio Seymour. In one of his entertaining papers recently published

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Mr. Reid remarks on the history and genealogy of the two most famous families in the Iroquois Nation:

I have been informed on indubitable authority that after the death of Katharine Weisenburg, the mother of his son, John, and daughters, Mary and Nancy, he (Sir William) had a Dutch widow as housekeeper, but that she did not remain with him long, as her place was taken in 1747 by a niece of Hendrick, being the daughter of his brother, Abraham, who is frequently spoken of in the Documentary History of New York. As in the case of Molly Brant, Sir William did not wed this Indian girl, who took the English name Caroline. She had three children by Sir William—one son and two daughters. The son was named William and the daughters Charlotte and Caroline. The mother died in giving birth to the third child. William was the first born. This half-breed son is the William Johnson, alias Tag-che-un-to, who is mentioned in Sir William's will as "William of Canajoharie." The date of Caroline's death was in 1753, which consequently makes the birth of Caroline, the half-breed, in 1753; and the installation of Molly Brant as Sir William's mistress was subsequent to that date. Probably this occurred soon after the death of Caroline as her daughters (Charlotte and Caroline) are said to have been adopted by Molly and treated by her as her own children, while William, the half-breed boy, was mainly raised by his grand-

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father, Abraham, or his uncle, "Little Abe," at Canajoharie Castle at Danube.

The history of the two daughters is of interest. Charlotte, the eldest, married a young British officer shortly before the Revolution, but who afterward joined the Continental army and fell at Monmouth Court House. His name was Henry Randall. They had two children, one named Charlotte Randall, who married George King. George and Charlotte King had a daughter Charlotte, who was the grandmother of my informant.<sup>1</sup>

The other daughter of Molly Brant's predecessor (Caroline) whose name was also Caroline, married a man named Michael Byrne, a clerk in Sir William's office of Indian affairs. Byrne was killed at Oriskany in Butler's Rangers. His young widow, Caroline Johnson, went with the Brants to Canada and afterward married an Indian agent named MacKim, whose descendants are still living in Canada.

Brant, who went to England with Hendrick and others in 1710, was the grandfather of Joseph and Molly Brant. When Joseph was born, in 1742, his grandfather was probably between sixty and seventy years old. Brant's father was called Nickus, or Nicklaus, by the Dutch. Stone anglicizes the name and calls him Nicholas Brant. He must have

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<sup>1</sup> There was a third child—a boy—named Morgan Randall, after General Daniel Morgan, in whose riflemen Henry Randall served.



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been at least thirty years old when Joseph was born, and Molly was at least six years older than Joseph.

The mother of Joseph and Molly was also a daughter of Abraham (the brother of Hendrick) and a sister or half-sister of "Little Abe" of the lower castle at Fort Hunter. This made her a niece of Hendrick also, and a sister of the girl Caroline, who went to live with Sir William in 1747.

It is also said that Joseph Brant's wife was a daughter of the Oneida chief of Sauquoit, and her mother was a daughter of Hendrick. So it will be seen by the foregoing that the families of Brant and Hendrick were closely interrelated. As Molly Brant's mother was the sister of Caroline, Molly's predecessor was her own aunt, and Sir William might be called her uncle.

Returning to William Johnson, the half-breed mentioned in his will: He was educated by Sir William at Dr. Wheelock's school at Lebanon, Conn., and was at the battle of Oriskany with Brant. Here he was killed in a hand-to-hand conflict with the half-breed Thomas Spencer, who played a conspicuous part with Herkimer's troops and at the siege of Fort Schuyler. Incidentally, Thomas Spencer is said to have been a son of the missionary, Rev. Elihu Spencer, by an Oneida girl, and was born at Oghwaga about the year 1755.

About a year after the death of Caroline Hendrick, Sir William offered his protection

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and affection to Mary Brant. She accepted, and outlived him; their life together during a period of twenty years—1754--74—having been by universal account of the times happy and affectionate. Mary Brant was not as handsome or as majestic a woman as her aunt and predecessor, Caroline, but she was a very pretty girl nevertheless, and developed into a woman of much tact, sterling virtues, and a model housewife. She was about nineteen years old when she accepted the protection of Sir William, and survived him many years. She bore him nine children—two boys and seven girls—but one of the latter died in infancy. Of these children the eldest was a boy, to whom they gave the name of Peter Warren Johnson, after the admiral; the second was a girl named Elizabeth, the third a girl named Magdalene, the fourth a girl named Margaret, the fifth a boy named George, the sixth a girl named Mary, the seventh a girl named Susanne, and the eighth a girl named Anne.

In the text of his will he describes these as “my natural children by my housekeeper, Mary Brant.”

Young William Johnson is the only one of Caroline Hendrick’s children mentioned or provided for in the will. But this may be ex-

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plained on the ground that the two girls, Charlotte and Caroline, had been married some time before his death—Charlotte in 1770 or '71 and Caroline a year or two later—and Sir William had undoubtedly made what he considered sufficient provision for them in the marriage settlements.

When the Tories were expelled from the Mohawk Valley in 1776, two years after the death of Sir William, Mary Brant and her children went with them and settled on Grand River, or the Oise, as the French called it. Of the two sons—Peter and George—no trace seems to have been left in history. The six girls all married white men, one of them becoming the wife of Dr. Kerr, a surgeon in the British army. Mrs. Kerr was an accomplished woman, a clever writer, and wrote two or three interesting little books on the customs and beliefs of the race to which she half belonged.

There was a legend, which most of Sir William's biographers have adopted, to the effect that his attention was first attracted to Mary Brant at a militia muster in Canajoharie. It was said that she mounted the horse of an officer and rode furiously around the parade-ground several times, her long black hair and loose red robes streaming in

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the wind; at last, riding up to where the great man stood, lost in admiration, and leaping gracefully from the back of the panting steed into his stalwart arms.

All this is very pretty; but the fact is that Sir William had known Mary Brant from the time she was ten years old, his intimate acquaintance with Nicklaus Brant and his family having begun very soon after his first settlement at Warrensbush. When Caroline Hendrick was in her fatal illness her sister, Brant's wife, came to nurse her, and Mary accompanied her mother. Not long after that the arrangement was made by which Mary became the mistress of his household.

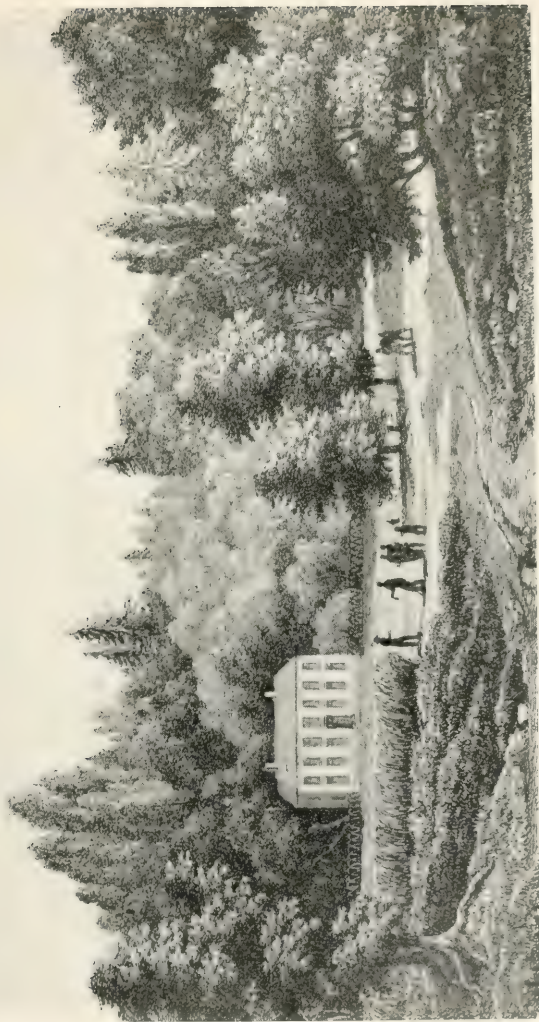
Mary Brant had been educated in the common English branches in the Manor school at Canajoharie, where her father lived before he became chief of the Upper Castle Mohawks. He had a comfortable frame house at Canajoharie and lived and dressed altogether after the fashion of white men. The female members of his family were never made to do the usual drudgery of squaws. He owned a good farm close to the town and cultivated it as well as any of his white neighbors. He was, as Mrs. Grant says, "a man of prodigious silence"—noted for his taciturnity and for his keen faculty of observa-

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tion as well. Whenever Sir William had an extremely delicate mission to fulfil with the Cayugas or Senecas, who were usually more or less recalcitrant, he always sent Nicklaus Brant. Beyond question, Sir William's intimate connection with the Hendrick and Brant families was more potent than any other agency in giving him the control and ascendancy over the Iroquois which he so successfully maintained through the twenty-odd trying and troublous years that immediately preceded the Revolution. Many times, when Sir William got hold of an obdurate and troublesome delegation of Senecas or Cayugas, he would turn them over to "Lady Molly," as she was commonly called after he was made a baronet—which was the next year after their alliance—and she "never failed to 'Mollyfy' them," as he used to say. Of this period in Sir William's life, Dr. Wheelock says:

I have seen at Mount Johnson and also at Johnson Hall sixty to eighty Indians at one time lodging under tents on the lawn and taking their meals from tables made of pine boards spread under the trees. They were delegations from all the Iroquois tribes, come to pow-wow with their great white brother, "Warragh-i-ya-gey" (the Indian name they gave to Sir William when they adopted him into the Iroquois nation and gave him a council-





FORT JOHNSON, NEAR AMSTERDAM, N. Y.

From an eighteenth century print.





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seat in the "Long House"). These visits must have been very expensive to Sir William, and he told me that never more than half their cost was defrayed out of the public exchequer.

"They say," said the baronet to me once, "that it is not right or fair that I should be superintendent over the Indians and an Indian trader at the same time. Why, bless me, doctor, my profits from the Indian trade do not reimburse me for my outlay in entertaining these delegations and giving presents to their members!

"The Indians are honest," he pursued. "I have often supplied one Indian or a small party living as far away as the Southern Senecas on Cattaraugus Creek or the Conewango—I have often supplied such with a complete hunting and trapping outfit—guns, ammunition, traps, etc., with blankets, woolen shirts, and other clothing—all on absolute credit. If they did not die or get killed by the Catawbas or Shawnese—their natural enemies—they would always come back and pay as soon as they got wherewithal to pay with."

Griffis, in his *Life of Sir William Johnson*, says that "after the death of his wife, Catharine, Sir William lived with various mistresses, etc." But Mr. Reid, a much more studious and careful historian, rejects this tradition. It is true that the baronet lived in a morganatic fashion with two Indian women at different times. But all the circumstantial

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evidence points to the conclusion that he was faithful to them, and that he was not in the least degree inclined to promiscuous licentiousness. He was always as solicitous for the welfare of his half-breed children as any father could be for any children; and as he was temperate and moderate in all things, it is fair to presume that he was equally so in his relations with women, white or red. In fact, the dignity he had to maintain to hold his influence over the Indians must have been sacrificed instantly had this been otherwise. The truth undoubtedly is that he was true and constant to the two Indian women with whom he lived openly in the sight of everybody—living with one of them about six years and with the other twenty years.

This survey of Sir William's peculiar domestic life has carried us to a point far ahead of the main thread of our narrative; but necessarily so, because I considered it advisable to treat that branch of the subject in a single sketch, rather than filter its incidents here and there in detached parts throughout his history. Many students of Sir William's life and some of his biographers—notably Griffis—have chosen to believe, or affected to believe, that his selection of Indian mistresses for the head of his do-

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mestic establishment, when he could have had his pick among refined, well-connected, and thoroughly educated white women, argues the lurking of a debased trait in his otherwise lofty character.

On this point, it seems to me, that argument would be wasted. Without discussion, I am inclined to believe with Mr. Reid, that the element of statecraft entered largely into the sum-total of reasons for these singular alliances, and that he chose, first, Caroline Hendrick, and, after her, Mary Brant, because he wanted a housewife who could make his Indian guests—of whom his house was seldom in lack—feel at home. His fortunes depended on his influence with the Indians. Without that he could never have been anything more than a settler in the Mohawk Valley; richer, perhaps, than his neighbors, but still only a settler. His command of the Iroquois just at the time when their adherence to the British cause was vital to the objects of British policy, made him the most important, if not actually the greatest, man in the colony. No white woman could have made Sir William's red henchmen feel at home in his house as Caroline Hendrick or Mary Brant could. If this was one of his motives, it was creditable at least to his ambi-

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tion, if not to his sense of propriety. But the point of propriety itself must be measured by the standard of morality prevailing in his days, not ours. And even if Caroline and Mary were only housekeepers or mistresses, and if, as he says in his will, their children were only "natural," yet his fidelity to them and his affection and solicitude for the children they bore him can not be forgotten or neglected in the scales of charity.

Returning now to consideration of Sir William's public life, it may be said that after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle he passed nearly a year in almost undivided attention to the affairs of his estate. The only interruption of any note he experienced was the arrangement and management of a grand council, at Albany, of the governors of the New England colonies, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia with the chiefs of the Indians friendly to the English and the colonists, or who were willing to be friendly in the future. This grand council was opened on the 20th of July, and lasted about ten days. There were present seven colonial governors, each accompanied by members of his staff; thirty Indian chiefs of high rank, each attended by several especially distinguished warriors of his tribe; and

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the Indian superintendents of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New York.

The Iroquois were by no means alone in representation. Chiefs were there from the Delawares of western Pennsylvania; the fierce and hitherto untamable Shawnese of what is now Ohio; Mingoes, Wyandots, Adirondacks—who came from territory claimed and hitherto held by the French—together with the “River Indians” (remnants of the former Pequots, Mohegans, Narragansetts, and other aborigines of New England). Perhaps the most interesting figure in this assemblage was the great war-chief of the Genesee Senecas, Hi-o-ka-to, who for years had vowed that he would never speak one word with an Englishman. Hi-o-ka-to was the husband of the celebrated Mary Jemison, a white woman, who, captured by the Algonquins when a little girl, had been retaken by the Senecas, and adopted by them. As soon as she grew to womanhood Hi-o-ka-to, then a redoubted warrior and knight errant of the tribe, nearly forty years of age, asked her to share his wigwam—or rather his house—which was a comfortable log cabin. She consented, and lived with him until his death, many years afterward. She wrote a narrative, which is doubtless the most interesting



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personal description of life among the Indians ever printed. In it she says of her stalwart brave after his death:

Ferocious as he may have been on the war-path, and savage as he may have been in battle, I can only say that no husband could have been kinder to wife than he was to me, and no man, white or any other color, could have been gentler than he was when inside the four walls of our cabin. In all our life together, he never spoke one cross word to me, and I have often seen him curb his fierce temper toward others simply because I happened to be present.

Governor Clinton and Sir William considered it a great point gained when Hi-o-ka-to was induced to attend this conference. Savage as he was, the Seneca war-chief did not lack ready wit. Some years later, during another council, Sir William, in a bantering way, asked him in the Iroquois tongue, "Why didn't you bring your white wife with you, Hi-o-ka-to? I would like to introduce her to my Indian wife." "Because," replied the chief, "I was afraid you white folks would steal her, the same as you do pretty much everything else we poor Indians have that is worth stealing!"

A remarkable and somewhat amusing feature of this grand council was the fact that

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the venerable senior chief of the Iroquois, Hendrick, was unable to attend, and asked the council to accept his brother Abraham as his representative—giving as the reason the fact that he was at that moment *prostrated by an acute attack of inflammatory gout!* A rather singular malady for an American Indian! Perhaps the old chief had availed himself too freely of his nephew-in-law's proverbial liberality with his "crusty old port" and "nut-brown Madeira!"

Toward the end of the grand council—on its sixth day—Chief Abraham made a speech, addressed particularly to the Senecas and Cayugas. This speech was provoked by some remarks made by Onnasdego, chief of the Onondagas, in which that orator accused the English of neglecting the western Iroquois, and thereby leaving their hearts open to the blandishments of the French emissaries. Abraham spoke in English, so that the assembled governors and members of their staffs could readily understand what he was saying. But he had provided interpreters to translate his speech as he went along to those Indians present who could not understand the English language. Lack of space forbids reproduction of his remarks. One quotation may serve as a sample:

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“You complain,” he said, “that the English, the Colonists, do not trust you. How can they when you do not trust them? There can be no confidence between two unless both share it alike. There can never be faith on one side and doubt on the other without distrust on both sides. And wherever there is distrust no real friendship can exist. You Western Iroquois listen to the silver tongues of French priests and emissaries whose only object is to lure you to ruin that their cause may profit by it. They do not love you. They would not give you a gourdful of succotash if you were starving. But when have the English and the Colonists failed to help you in distress? Put away the French! Send them across the Lake! Tell them to practise their bows and scrapes and grimaces upon the stupid Indians of Canada—not upon the noble Iroquois!”

To Abraham’s speech a reply was made by Kayaghshota, chief of the “Old Castle” or Lake Senecas, whose village occupied the present site of Geneva. No record of the Seneca’s speech seems to have been preserved. Mr. Croghan, who kept the minutes of the council, says simply that it was “an eloquent and plausible defense of the vacillating conduct of his tribe.” Kayaghshota, it may be interesting to remark, was the uncle of the famous Red Jacket—probably the most accomplished and powerful orator the Indian race ever produced.

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This grand council was one of the most picturesque events in the history of the colonies. Many of the chiefs brought their wives with them, and some brought their children. All were provided with new clothing by Governor Clinton as soon as they arrived, together with a liberal supply of the gaudy ornaments so much prized by the Indians; and the streets of Albany were daily thronged by the gaily clad sons and daughters of the forest enjoying an ovation far beyond their wildest dreams. For many years afterward the proudest boast of an Indian would be: "I was at the great Albany Council!" Stone says:

The old Dutch city had in fact seldom witnessed such a sight. Here were gathered Indians from the far West, many of whom were destined to redden their tomahawks in the blood of so many brave garrisons under the great Pontiac. Here were many of the River Indians—remnants of once powerful tribes—whose grandfathers had followed Uncas and Miantonomoh to battle, and had taken their last stand with the ill-fated King Philip. In one spot a painted warrior might have been seen smoking his pipe as he recounted to his wondering companions the sights seen in his morning's stroll; while everywhere groups of picturesquely attired Indians, with nodding plumes and variegated blankets, wandered through the streets gaz-

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ing with curious eye upon the novelties of civilization.

The results of this council were more satisfactory and on a larger scale than any previously held. The Iroquois renewed all their ancient covenants with the king. The Senecas, who had never before formally acknowledged the covenants of 1684 and 1710, now gave in their complete adhesion through Hi-o-ka-to, Captain Jean Montour<sup>1</sup> (himself a

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<sup>1</sup> There were three Montours: Jean, born about 1715, André, born about 1720, and Henry. They were the sons of Catharine Montour by a young half-breed chief of the Niagara Senecas, who took her name. Catharine Montour was a daughter of the Count de Frontenac by a Huron woman. She was born at Fort Frontenac about 1692, and her name figures in a curious old document called Accusation against Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac, in which, among other things, he is charged with "debasing the morals of the colony by propagating more than sixty half-breeds!" Jean and André Montour were both chiefs of high rank in the Seneca nation. Catharine Montour received a good education in a convent at Montreal. But in 1710, during Queen Anne's War, while journeying from Montreal to Fort Frontenac, she was captured by a raiding party of Senecas and taken to their village at Black Rock. Here she soon afterward married the young chief, who took her name and she seemed perfectly contented. At any rate, upon the exchange of captives that followed the Peace of Utrecht, she refused to leave her husband and spent her life among the Senecas. After the death of her husband in 1735 she became female chief, or Queen in her own right, and ruled the Niagara and Southern Senecas until her death in 1752. She carefully educated her children, Jean, André,

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French half-breed), and the Tonawanda chief "Black Loon"; all of whom had hitherto been opposed to English influence. They agreed to expel all French emissaries and priests from their territory, and they also promised to arrest the most pestiferous of them, "Jean Coeur,"<sup>1</sup> and deliver him up to the Colonial authorities. They never kept this promise, but they expelled "Jean Coeur" with the rest. They agreed to hold no further communication with the French, to forbid the residence of French interpreters in their midst, and to prohibit all trade or barter with French traders; together with many other things the English desired.

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Henry, and three girls. One of her grandchildren was the famous "Queen Esther," who practically commanded the Indians in the massacre of Wyoming. Jean and André Montour were conspicuous in the old French War, in Pontiac's Rebellion, and in the Revolution. They were good warriors and hard fighters, but held reputations for humanity equal to that of Joseph Brant. Henry never achieved fame.

<sup>1</sup> In the text we have followed the orthography of the Colonial Documentary Records; but there was no "Jean Coeur." The person meant was Joncaire, a captain in the French service and for many years the principal agent and emissary of the Canadian Government among the Western Indians. We shall have occasion to refer to him frequently later on. At the time under consideration he was what might be called "principal intelligence officer" of the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs, and had his headquarters at Fort Niagara.



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The Governor then requested them to give a list of articles they needed to make good their losses during the late war. The list was rather formidable. Among other things, they wanted a thousand guns, with hunting-knives, hatchets, flints, and ammunition; two thousand blankets; a large quantity of red flannel cloth; farming utensils, such as hoes, spades, iron plows, sickles, axes, etc.; cooking utensils; some large kettles, suitable for making salt from the salt-springs, and maple-sugar from the sap of trees, etc., etc. The total footed up prodigiously. But the Governor—or the assembled governors—promised that the list should be filled out, and they kept their word.

Prior to Sir William Johnson's time it had not been the policy to arm the Indians indiscriminately. But he took the view that unless well armed and practised in the use of their weapons, they would be of little value as allies, and from his first official connection with Indian affairs he had done all he could to provide them with serviceable guns and plenty of ammunition. At that time the rifle was little known outside of the trading-zone of Old Lancaster, Pa., where the manufacture of rifled weapons in America was begun by a colony of Swiss gunsmiths in 1729—hardly

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twenty years before the Albany Council—and, at the time under consideration (1749), Lancaster still enjoyed the monopoly of rifle-making in this country. A few specimens had found their way into New York, and Sir William had a very fine one, made by Deckert, which he bought while attending the Treaty Council at Lancaster in 1744. But the production of rifles was limited, and there was nothing like a general supply of them.

The regulation musket—cumbrous, heavy, and carrying an ounce ball—was not suited to the use of the Indians, who wanted a lighter gun of smaller bore. So, among the first things Sir William did when he became Indian Commissioner, was to design a gun specially adapted to the Indian's requirements. It was three feet long in the barrel and about four feet two inches over all, smooth bore, carried a half-ounce spherical bullet, and could be used either with ball or with small shot. This was known for many years as the "Indian-trade smooth bore," and was not completely supplanted by the rifle on the frontier until after the beginning of the nineteenth century. The barrels and locks were made and proved in Birmingham and then shipped to this country, where the stocks were fitted by Colonial gunsmiths. Twelve hundred of these guns

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were ordered immediately after the council, and in due time they were in the hands of the Indians. The other articles wanted were more easily procured, and the distribution of them was begun at once.

Philip Van Courtlandt, who as a young boy attended this council with his father, the Patroon, relates the amusing incident that Hi-o-ka-to took a great fancy to the garb of a Highlander he happened to see in Albany, and asked the Governor to give him a Highland outfit. The Governor succeeded in finding a shirt, kilt, and tartan that would fit his stalwart proportions, and the great war-chief of the Genesee Senecas strutted around Albany as a Highlander to the infinite delight of the rising generation and the admiration of the women of his own race. And long afterward it was his custom to appear on state occasions in his own tribe clad in the plaid and tartan of the Forty-second Highlanders. The council adjourned the 30th of July, with a grand outdoor banquet, at which were present over a hundred Indians and as many white people. Then the Indians went quietly back to their forests and peace reigned supreme.

The next two years passed without special event. Sir William had recently come into possession of another large tract of land,

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which was patented in 1753 as the "Kingsboro Patent"—though he took possession of his part of it and began to improve it more than two years before the date of the patent. This afterward became known as the "Johnstown tract." It lay some distance north of the Mohawk River and several miles west of Mount Johnson. Improving this new tract and managing his great farm and mills on the Chuctenunda near Mount Johnson, together with his official duties as Indian Superintendent, colonel-in-chief of the Albany County militia, and king's magistrate, must have kept his hands full. Yet he found a good deal of time for writing and reading, and for such diversions as horse-racing and hunting.

In 1751 the first—and perhaps the only—really unpleasant episode in his public career occurred. During the late war he had expended large sums of money from his private purse for the public service over and above the amounts currently appropriated by the Assembly. Most of these expenditures were for the maintenance of the Indians he had mobilized for the two abortive attempts to organize expeditions against Crown Point, and for the invasion of Canada. During this period he had also maintained the white gar-

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rison of Oswego for a considerable time beyond the expiration of a contract he had for that service. The total amount of his private expenditure in these directions was nine thousand nine hundred and seventy-six pounds sterling and some shillings and pence—nearly \$50,000.

These expenditures were under two heads: first, those which had been submitted to Governor Clinton and approved by him before disbursement; and, second, those approved by the Governor after disbursement. The first amounted to £5,700; the last to £4,276. During the session of 1750-51 Sir William submitted these accounts to the Committee of Supply in the Assembly and asked reimbursement. After long consideration, the committee reported and the Assembly passed two resolutions directing payment of the £5,700, which had been approved by the Governor before disbursement. But they also passed a resolution directing further investigation of the £4,276, approved by the Governor after disbursement. In debate on these resolutions, during which Sir William was present in the Assembly Hall, severe animadversions were made upon the "close corporation" that was alleged to exist between the Governor, Chief-Justice DeLancey, the Attorney-Gen-

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eral, and Sir William. In the course of the debate one member of the Assembly—Mr. Hardenburgh, of Ulster—referred in rather caustic terms to the fact that Sir William had for several years “filled the apparently incongruous, if not wholly incompatible, stations of Superintendent of Indian Affairs and Indian Trader on a large scale at the same time!”

After hearing this, Sir William left the hall of the Assembly, and the same afternoon sent a note to Mr. Hardenburgh asking him if he intended by those remarks to impugn his personal integrity. Sir William was at that time the guest of Mr. DeLancey, in New York, and that gentleman carried the note. Mr. Hardenburgh promptly replied by inquiring whether he (Sir William) intended his note as preliminary to a demand for satisfaction. To this Sir William responded at once as follows:

DEAR SIR: Replying to your inquiry in reply to my note by the hands of Mr. DeLancey, permit me to say that the idea of a demand for satisfaction never entered my mind. Nor have I entertained any thought of individual grievance at your hands. Had you answered that the condition of my accounts and my relation to the Indians did seem to involve my personal integrity, I should simply



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have given you the key to the vault where my books of account are kept, and requested you to examine them at your own leisure and in your own way.

As for "satisfaction," permit me to say: first, that I am well aware of the parliamentary privilege which averts personal responsibility for language uttered in debate in a legislative body; and, second, I believe the practise of dueling is always barbarous and often murderous. I should be sorry if I thought I had a repute for courage that could be sustained only by fighting duels. Believe me, my dear sir, that I shall always keep all my bullets and all my marksmanship for the enemies of my country! I shall never visit them upon any of my own countrymen who may be hostile to me personally.

I have the honor to be, with profound respect,  
Your Most Obedient Servant,

WILLIAM JOHNSON.

It took a pretty courageous man—and an Irishman at that—to thus denounce and flout the practise of dueling in the year 1751. The Assembly adjourned two days after that, leaving the £4,276 for further consideration. Mr. Hardenburgh seems to have been impressed by Sir William's attitude, because, at the next session, when Mr. Holland moved "consideration of the unsettled accounts of Colonel William Johnson," Mr. Hardenburgh

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seconded the motion, and an appropriation to reimburse him for his outlay of £4,276 of private funds in the public service was passed under suspension of the rules.

In the meantime, however, Sir William had resigned the office of Sole Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and, though the Governor and many others besought him to withdraw the resignation, he remained firm. He knew very well that no one in the Assembly bore any malice toward him personally. But he also knew that a considerable majority of the Assembly hated the Governor, and that, in attacking him about his accounts, they were only clubbing the Governor over his shoulders. Still, it was a thankless position; he was tired of the eternal bickerings between the Governor and the Assembly, and he wanted to place himself out of range of their fusillade. Besides, his private business was being neglected, and, ambitious as he was for public life and public honors, his first love was always his home, his children, his dusky sweetheart, his horses, his cattle, his wide-spreading lands, and his buzzing mills.

Every overture was made to him to resume the superintendency. Finally, after the Assembly had paid his accounts in full, he told the Governor that whenever his services in

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dealing with the Indians might seem desirable, he would accept a temporary appointment to visit them or confer with them as a special envoy, but under no circumstances would he resume the permanent superintendency. The result was that the Governor did not fill his place, but used him from time to time on special missions, as occasion required.

The Indians, as soon as they heard of Sir William's resignation, took it deeply to heart. Runners were sent from the Lower Mohawk Castle all through the Iroquois Nation by Hendrick, asking for a council of chiefs posthaste. In a few days quite a delegation gathered, including Captain Jean Montour of the Senecas, whom the runners happened to find visiting his wife's people at Onondaga Castle. The chiefs reached Albany, where the Governor then was temporarily staying, late at night, and they waited on him early the next morning, requesting a private interview. This was, of course, granted, and as soon as the doors were closed, Hendrick said:

We have come to consult with our Brother Corlear (their name for all the governors) in relation to Colonel Johnson. We have just heard that he has resigned. When the war was breaking out, your Excellency recommended him to us, and you then told us that we might consider anything he

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said as being spoken by yourself. So as we had had no hand in his appointment we have done nothing to induce his resignation. Judge, therefore, the shock we felt when he sent us a belt of love and peace, with a letter saying he had resigned and would be our superintendent no more. We can not express our feelings. He must come back to us. No one can take his place in our hearts. We can never learn to believe the words of any one as we believed him. You, or if you can not, then our Great Father, the King, must make him come back to us. We can not get along without him!

Captain Montour then spoke for the Senecas:

“Our nation,” he said, “is hard to control. There are many good Senecas, and also many bad ones. But all love Colonel Johnson, all believe what he says, and all, good and bad alike, will listen to his words and have faith in his promises. His tongue is not forked. He always speaks with one tongue. In peace, he was like a fertile field that raised corn and pumpkins and melons. In war, he was like a tree that grew for us to bear fruit, but now seems to be falling down, though it has many roots sunk deep in the soil of our affection, our confidence, and our esteem. His knowledge of our affairs, our laws, and our language made us think he was not like other white men, but an Indian like ourselves. Not only that, but in his house is an Indian woman, and his little children are

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half-breeds, as I also am, your Excellency knows —only I am a French half-breed and Colonel Johnson's little children are English half-breeds. We understand that he declines to return to his office. This makes us afraid you will have to appoint some one in his place who does not know us —some person who is a stranger to us and to our affairs. We therefore ask you to compel him to resume his office of superintendent, or if you can not compel him yourself, to send a letter asking our Great Father, the King, to compel him. We know that he will obey the King. Please tell the King, if you write to him, that we want Colonel Johnson over us, and no one else. He has keen ears and hears a great deal, and what he hears he tells to us truthfully. He also has sharp eyes, and sees a long way ahead, and conceals nothing from us."

After hearing these speeches the Governor adjourned the interview till the next morning at nine o'clock, when he promised the chiefs that he would answer them. The Governor's reason for deferring his reply to the chiefs was that he expected Sir William to reach Albany that evening, and wished to see him before making a definite answer. Johnson arrived about seven o'clock, and the Governor at once called upon him. He was visibly affected when the Governor told him what the chiefs had said, but persisted in his declination to resume office. He finally agreed, how-

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ever, to deal with the Indians in his personal capacity whenever the Governor might consider such services essential to the public welfare. But he declared he would hold no official position calculated to bring him into contact with what he termed "that factious and malignant majority in the Assembly."

The next morning the Governor and Sir William called on the chiefs together, and explained the situation to them. They were partly appeased, and the whole affair was left *in statu quo*. No successor to Sir William was appointed, but, in his personal or unofficial capacity, he continued to supervise the Indian affairs of the colony almost as closely as he had done while in office. Under such conditions the years 1751 and 1752 passed without incident of special note; the French secretly pushing their preparations, the British and Colonial governments resting supinely.

In 1753 the signs of impending war began to multiply. The movements of the French to take actual possession of the Ohio Valley had at last roused the English and Colonial governments to a sense of peril, and they began, rather slowly and clumsily, to take measures for safety. In 1748, at the close of "King George's War," a company had been



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formed in Virginia, of which Lawrence and Augustine Washington were members, called the "Ohio Land Company." This corporation secured a grant of 600,000 acres on the south side of the Ohio River, between the Monongahela and the Great Kanawha. Both the French and Indians held that the King of England had no right to grant lands in that region. The Indians owned the land and the French claimed sovereignty by right of original discovery, exploration, settlement in the shape of trading establishments, and free travel to and fro with consent of the Indians. According to the ethics of those days, these acts constituted a prime basis for the claim of sovereignty.

The English based their counterclaim mainly upon their old treaty with the Iroquois in 1684, at Albany, confirmed in 1710, and reconfirmed at Lancaster, Pa., in 1744. By that treaty the English undertook to defend the domain of the Iroquois, and the latter had claimed jurisdiction over the Ohio Valley and all lands drained by its tributaries, "as far south as the Chilhowee or Great Smoky Mountains." This was purely a claim of rapine! For, while the Iroquois had in earlier days frequently invaded the Ohio country and subdued its aboriginal inhabitants,

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they had never attempted permanently to occupy the territory. Their invasions were, in fact, simply raids, and they had come and gone, leaving wreck and ruin in their tracks, much like the Tartar hordes when they invaded Hindostan, or the Goths, Vandals, and Huns when they overran Europe.

That the Iroquois were and had been for centuries the most powerful Indian nation east of the Mississippi, and had frequently invaded and ravaged the territory of their weaker neighbors on all sides of them, was undeniable; but that mere rapine and ravage should constitute a basis of permanent sovereignty was a theory that only Indian schools of international law would be likely to teach. However, England was willing to accept such a basis for her own claim of sovereignty in the Ohio Valley, and, as the sequel proved, she was willing to fight for it to the death. The fact is, the English statesmen were never serious about this shadowy claim. They laughed at it themselves over their dinner-tables and their Madeira. The real truth was that they had finally made up their minds to oust the French from North America altogether, and one pretext was as good as another.

In the spring of 1752 the Ohio Company

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sent a daring backwoodsman, named Christopher Gist, to explore their grant of land. Gist went as far west as the mouth of the Great Kanawha, and on his return in the autumn made an interesting report. This was the first effort—even pretense—the English had ever made to explore the country they claimed. Event now followed event in quick succession. The Governor of Virginia, Dinwiddie, sent a company of frontiersmen, under Captain Trent, to the head of the Ohio, where they built a small log fort. Captain Trent had forty-one men. In April, 1754, a French and Indian force about 700 strong came down the Allegheny River and invested the little fort. As the French had four pieces of artillery, Captain Trent saw that resistance would be hopeless, and he at once accepted the terms offered by the French commander, Captain Contrecoeur.

The little garrison marched out with the honors of war and Contrecoeur at once proceeded to enlarge the fort, mounted his cannon on its ramparts, and took formal possession of the Ohio Valley in the name of the King of France. Then followed Washington's advance to Great Meadows, and his skirmish with a scouting party of French and Indians under de Jumonville, who was killed with ten

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of his men, and the rest, twenty-two in number, wounded or taken prisoners. Then came the building of "Fort Necessity" and its capitulation a few days afterward to a force of about seven hundred French and Indians under Captain de Villiers. This ended the operations of 1754, and left the French in full control west of the mountains. The "Old French War" was now fairly on. The French had gained the first success; the English were slowly getting ready to fight.

During the period whose events in the Ohio Valley we have thus briefly sketched, affairs in the northern colonies remained in a quiet state until late in the fall of 1753, when alarming rumors reached Sir William Johnson of the presence of numerous French emissaries among the Senecas, and of great discontent on the part of the Western Iroquois generally. Lieutenant-Governor DeLancey was then acting Governor, and he at once requested Sir William to visit the Senecas and do what he could to quiet them. Though it was late in December, and considerable snow was on the ground, Sir William did not shrink from a winter journey on horseback between Mount Johnson and Kanandagea, the principal town of the Senecas. The distance was about 160 miles. There was a fair road

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to Fort Stanwix, and a good bridle-path from there to Onondaga Castle; the rest of the way there was nothing but Indian trails. However, there were comfortable Indian villages along the route, where he was sure to find hearty welcome and the best that the simple hospitality of the Iroquois afforded, which, to a great extent, mitigated the rigors of the journey. On this occasion Sir William took with him only his half-breed orderly, John Abiel, and Nicklaus Brant, who had then just become chief of the Upper Castle Mohawks. The journey was made in seven days; but Sir William stopped one day to visit Hi-o-ka-to in his village at Genesee Falls. He found no French emissaries at Hi-o-ka-to's town, though the chief told him some had appeared there a fortnight before, and he had peremptorily sent them away. "But you will find plenty of them farther west," he said. Hi-o-ka-to then saddled his horse and accompanied Sir William on his journey.

Arriving at the Seneca capital, Sir William was heartily welcomed. The council-house, a commodious log building, having a puncheon floor (split and hewn logs) and a large fireplace, was allotted for his accommodation, with several attendants. A feast was made in his honor, and all the warriors

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present in the town were introduced to him by Hi-o-ka-to. No French emissaries were found, but he was informed that several French traders from Niagara had been there recently. The only Frenchman at Kanandagea, to the great surprise of Sir William, proved to be the redoubtable Captain Joncaire himself, who had arrived two or three days before him. The captain, when he learned that Sir William was in town, made no effort to avoid him, but, in fact, paid him a visit the day after his arrival. He assured Sir William that his presence at the Seneca capital had no political significance, but was merely a visit to old friends. He reminded Sir William that ten years of his boyhood and youth had been passed at this town as a captive, adopted into the tribe, and jocularly remarked that, though he returned to Canada when about twenty years old, he was still a Seneca by adoption, and, as such, was under the jurisdiction of the English Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Iroquois nation! He told Sir William about the visit of Major George Washington to his trading-post at Venango, a month or so previous to this time.

Major Washington was at Venango on his way to Fort LeBoeuf, on a tour of observation for Governor Dinwiddie, during Novem-



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ber of that year, and he also stopped there a couple of days on his return journey. In his journal of that mission, Washington says that Captain Joncaire was very polite and entertained him handsomely. This was the first news Sir William had received of Washington's tour of observation along the Allegheny line of French posts. It was highly important news to him, because it indicated that Virginia had begun to move in earnest with regard to the Ohio question. As Joncaire bore a relation to Indian affairs on the French side in many respects analogous to that borne by Sir William on the English side, their accidental meeting at the Seneca capital in midwinter was an interesting occurrence.

A singular incident of this casual meeting of Sir William Johnson and Captain Joncaire in the Seneca capital was the fact that neither one of them could speak or understand the other's mother tongue. Joncaire had no knowledge of English and Sir William knew nothing of French. Both, however, could speak the Iroquois tongue as fluently as an Indian orator, and it was in that language that they held all their conversations. It is doubtful whether a similar instance ever occurred in the careers of two men as prominent in their respective countries as these two.

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Sir William remained at Kanandagea about a week, and then returned home by easy stages, stopping a day or two at each important village on his route, and, as he expressed it, "thoroughly feeling the pulse of the Senecas, Cayugas, and Onondagas." His conclusion was that the stories about French emissaries had been exaggerated, and that their operations had been confined mainly to the Western Senecas living near Niagara, and on the Tonawanda, or to the southern branch of the tribe in the valleys of Cattaraugus Creek and the Conewango.

The rest of the winter and the spring of 1754 passed without particular incident in the colony of New York. But at the end of June, that year, an event occurred of primary importance. It was the convention at Albany of delegates from the colonies of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland to form a plan of concerted action in the war which all now saw to be inevitable. There had been meetings of Colonial governors before, but this was the first instance of a convention or congress of delegates chosen for the specific purpose of forming a Colonial Union. Virginia and the Carolinas were not represented except by letters from their gov-

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ernors approving the scheme, and saying that they would cooperate in any program the convention might adopt. "In fact, gentlemen," wrote Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia, "the war is at my back door already, and I have my hands full. I will try to keep my own frontier intact, and that is all I can do. You must take care of the northern frontier." The governors of the Carolinas wrote in a similar vein.

With this Congress met also delegations from the Six Nations, from the Delawares of western Pennsylvania, and the River Indians. The deliberations lasted several days, and the results were a resolution to act together, to recommend that the king appoint Governor Shirley of Massachusetts commander-in-chief of the confederated Colonial forces, and an agreement as to the quotas of men, money, and supplies to be furnished by each colony in their united operations. It was agreed that the eight colonies represented could raise and maintain an effective force of 25,000 men for general operations; that Virginia and the Carolinas should be considered as doing their share if they effectively defended their own frontiers, and furnished contingents for any movement that might be made against the French posts on the Ohio.

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Three commissioners were appointed to go to England and lay the whole situation before the king and his ministers. They were instructed to ask that at least twelve thousand British regulars be sent over at once, and that the fleet on the North American station be increased to a force sufficient to blockade the St. Lawrence and cut off communication between France and Canada.

On the part of the Indians, it was agreed that they should furnish, upon call, a force of at least one thousand picked warriors for general service, provided their commander-in-chief should be Sir William Johnson. And in addition to these, the Indians undertook to raise a force of at least six hundred more to help repel any attempt the French might make against Oswego, or any other salient point within the territory of the Six Nations. The Indians also stipulated that their warriors, when in the field, should receive the same pay, rations, and clothing-allowance as the provincial troops. And that if, upon inspection, the gun of any warrior should be found disabled or unserviceable, he should receive a new one free of cost; also that each warrior, when mustered for actual service, should receive a new blanket, a red flannel shirt, a blue hunting-jacket with red trim-

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ming, and a pair of stout leather or buckskin leggings!

Having settled all these things, the Congress of 1754 at Albany adjourned, subject to recall at any time by Governor Shirley of Massachusetts. That Congress was the embryo of another Congress that met twenty years later at Philadelphia—whose history has been heard round the world!

## CHAPTER III

### BRADDOCK'S DEFEAT AND THE BATTLE OF LAKE GEORGE

1752-1754

IN order that a clear and accurate conception may be formed of the relative conditions prevailing in their respective North American colonies at the time when England and France began their final and decisive struggle for empire on the continent, it is necessary to survey, first, the numerical strength of each Colonial establishment in white people; second, the numerical strength and general fighting power of the Indian tribes under the control of or in alliance with each; third, the methods of each respectively in dealing with the Indians; and, fourth, the effect of their diverse methods in winning and holding the fealty of the Indian tribes.

With regard to the relative numbers of white people resident in the North American colonies of the two countries, it may be said that at the beginning, or just before the be-



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ginning, of the French war, the Marquis Duquesne, then (1752) just appointed Governor-General of Canada, reported that there were in all the French Canadian possessions then known as New France a white male population of 22,000, inclusive of the royal or regular troops then garrisoning the various military strongholds in Canada. As these troops at that time numbered about 3,000 to 3,500, it follows that the civilian white adult male population of all French Canada in 1752 did not exceed 19,000. The English colonies, stretching along the Atlantic coast from Maine to Georgia, had at the same time nearly if not quite 1,600,000 people, of whom at least 200,000 were adult males. At first glance any one would say that a contest between 22,000 men on one side and 200,000 or thereabouts on the other, would necessarily be a farce, but as a matter of fact, it took the 200,000, backed by all the power of England, seven years to conquer the 22,000.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is unquestionable that the marquis, in his estimate of 22,000, etc., meant to include only males capable of bearing arms or of military age. This would have embraced all males between sixteen and sixty years old under the militia regulations then prevailing in "New France." He must have had in mind only the able-bodied male population, because Voltaire, writing of the same period, says: ". . . And while the population of British America was over 1,200,000, that of all

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During the progress of the seven years' struggle, the white French population of Canada was increased by some 3,000 or 4,000 civilian adventurers, and the French Govern-

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Canada, Cape Breton, and Louisiana could not have exceeded 80,000 souls." If Voltaire's estimate of the total white population—80,000—and Duquesne's estimate of the number of males capable of bearing arms—18,000 to 19,000 besides the regular troops—were both correct, it would argue an extraordinarily large proportion of adult males—about one in every four of the total population—but that was always true of Canada under French rule. The adult males outnumbered the grown women in a proportion never less than two to one. This was because as a rule Frenchmen came to Canada single and formed alliances with Indian women. The immigration of married men with their families was exceptional.

Dr. Woodrow Wilson, in his *History of the American People*, says (p. 4, vol. ii) that "probably there were not more than 12,000 Frenchmen, all told, in America when William became king (1689)." This, of course, was sixty-three years prior to the Marquis Duquesne's estimate of the number of males capable of bearing arms, and about the same length of time previous to Voltaire's estimate of 80,000 of all sexes and ages. However, on p. 98 of the same volume, Dr. Wilson, writing of the period of 1750–52, adopts Voltaire's estimate of 80,000 as the total white population of Canada at the outbreak of the old French War. But Voltaire's estimate of the total white population of the English colonies in 1753, which in his own original phrase is "*plus que douze-cent mille*" [more than 1,200,000], is too low. No census was taken in those days. The tide of immigration was not at flood. We had by Franklin's estimate about 2,500,000 white people in the American colonies in 1776. Taking the two extremes and calculating on the basis that an actuary would adopt, we have figured out that the total population of the Anglo-American colonies in 1753 was not less than one million six hundred

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ment succeeded in reenforcing its garrisons or its field force there with seven regiments of regular infantry, besides some small units of other arms of the service, which will be noted later on.

As against this reenforcement, it may be said that from the beginning to the end of the struggle England landed in the colonies, from time to time, a total force of 18,000 British regular troops, and besides, supported the campaigns on land by an exertion of her sea power, which, during the last four years of the struggle, practically obliterated all means of communication between France and her Canadian colonies.

Therefore, we have calculated that during the whole seven years' struggle, the French had in North America, exclusive of Louisiana, about 22,000 white civilians (males), and be-

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thousand (1,600,000) souls, which included about 200,000 negro slaves. At any rate, the first reliable census—1800—showed that natural increase for forty-seven years could not have produced the difference between Voltaire's estimate of 1753 and the actual count of 1800, for between those two dates the volume of immigration was not enough to make up the difference. As for the State of New York, with which this work mainly deals, an enumeration in 1790—seven years after the close of the Revolution—showed a population of 341,000; and New York at that time was fourth of the States in number of people, being exceeded by Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

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tween 10,000 and 11,000 regular troops. As before remarked, this disparity of numbers—not less than ten to one, so far as white males of military age were concerned—might seem appalling, but when due account is taken of the radical and fundamental difference between the systems of the two nations in their respective colonies, the numerical inequality, to a great extent, loses its significance. Colonization from the English point of view, as practised in the colonies of the Atlantic seaboard, meant permanent improvement, home-making, the building of commercial cities and towns, the clearing of forests, creation of farms, cultivation of the soil, manufactures of various kinds, and a general commerce by sea and by land. The meaning of this, so far as concerned the Indian, was a constant policy of driving him back, of obtaining his lands from time to time by hook or by crook, by nominal purchase or by conquest. It meant also a traffic with him that was insufficiently regulated, if regulated at all, and, as a rule, in this traffic the Indian was cheated out of his products with as little hesitation or compunction as he had previously been cheated out of his lands. The result of all this was that wherever the English colonists encountered the Indian, they made an enemy of him. This

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was true along the whole coast and back to the Allegheny range of mountains, with the single exception of the Iroquois Confederacy, or the Six Nations, living in central and western New York.

On the other hand, the French system of colonization was simply a military occupation. The French never colonized Canada—they simply garrisoned it. They did not covet the lands of the Indian. All their policy was shaped to discourage permanent settlement of French colonists on any considerable scale. The most that the French did in the way of permanent settlement was the building of three good-sized towns—Quebec, Montreal, and Louisburg—together with a number of smaller towns and villages; but these cities, towns, and villages were little more than rendezvous or places of arms, either for defense pure and simple against foreign aggression, such as Louisburg, or as depots or entrepôts for their Indian trade, which was, from beginning to end, the lifeblood of the French colonial system in Canada. There was never a time in the history of French Canada, from the advent of Samuel Champlain, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, until the final evacuation of the country, after the fall of Montreal in 1760,

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when the agriculture of New France or Canada produced anything like a sufficient supply of foodstuffs for the needs of its white inhabitants, comparatively few as they were.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "In 1753," says Voltaire, "the exports of Canada amounted to but £68,000, while its imports were £208,000. During the same year the exports of the English provinces were £1,486,000, their imports £983,000. In 1755 Canadian imports were 5,203,272 livres, its exports only 1,515,730 livres. 'Le Canada coutait beaucoup et rapportait très peu' [Canada costs a great deal and returns very little]" pursues Voltaire; and he proceeds to argue that the policy of expending so much blood and treasure in maintaining and defending such an unprofitable dependency is unstatesmanlike and wrong. Voltaire then goes on to say: "Si la dixième partie de l'argent englouti dans cette colonie avait été employé à défricher nos terres incultes en France, on aurait fait un gain considérable. . . . Mais il faut que le roi s'amuse; et cette colonie ruineuse, c'est un de ses joujous!" [If the tenth part of the money squandered on this colony had been used to improve our waste lands in France there would have been a considerable profit. . . . But the king must amuse himself, and this ruinous colony is one of his playthings!] He concludes by describing Canada as "un puisard de l'argent et une grande éponge du sang de la France!" [A sinkhole for the money and a vast sponge for the blood of France!] This may have been nothing more than Voltaire's habitual cynicism, but there is no disputing his facts. In the long run France spent on Canada ten times the money she received in return, shed the blood of her sons in torrents by land and sea to defend it, and then lost all ignominiously in the end. The deduction is plain: her system was false. It was opposed to the genius of modern civilization and hence had to fall, but we can not help admiring the desperate courage and the unflinching fortitude with which she defended it to the last gasp.



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The Indians soon found out that the French did not want their lands, did not wish to cut down and clear away their forests, did not propose a policy which would disturb them or compel them to move from the habitations of their forefathers to new forests and new hunting-grounds. Therefore, the jealousy and hatred with which the Indians farther south regarded the English colonies was never felt or cherished toward the French. In the social sense, the Frenchman was much better adapted to deal with the Indian character than the Englishman. The Englishman as a rule disliked to associate with Indians. He considered them an inferior race—dirty, slovenly, and on all accounts to be avoided whenever possible. On the other hand, the Frenchman made himself at home in the Indian villages; married, or in a less formal way allied himself with their women; raised large families of half-breeds; learned their language, or taught them his own, or both; traded with them, in the main honestly; and, above all, was never afraid of them. The result of all this was that when the two powers arrived at the threshold of their final struggle for control in North America, the French could count on the support of the entire fighting strength of every tribe of Indians

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east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio, excepting alone the Iroquois.

Now, to this happy method of ingratiating themselves socially and politically with the Indians, the French had the additional advantage of the labors of their priests, the Jesuit Fathers. These devoted men, beginning away back early in the seventeenth century, traversed the entire continent, visited almost every tribe of Indians, not merely east of the Mississippi River, but passed beyond it to the Missouri, and even to the foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains, introducing their peculiar rites into every tribe, and impressing the sacredness of their personality upon the abundant superstition of the Indians. It is really an open question whether the tact, benevolence, and good nature displayed by the French traders and soldiers had been as potent an influence in bringing the great mass of western Indians under French control as the ministrations of their black-robed priests. Be that as it may, they had brought them at the time now under consideration—say 1753–54—completely under French sway, and not only that, but they also at that time seriously disputed with the English the control of the western tribe of the Iroquois nation itself—the Senecas—who were by far the largest and

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most powerful clan of the Six Nations. However, as this particular subject belongs to a later phase, we will not further discuss it here.

Proceeding now to consider the numerical strength of the Indians under the control of either power, it may be said that in 1753-54 the population of the Six Nations was variously estimated. In 1752, immediately after the Marquis Duquesne assumed the Governor-Generalship of Canada, Captain Joncaire, who had for many years been the principal "Indian Intelligence Officer" for the Government of Canada, reported to the Governor-General that, according to the best of his information, the total number of the Iroquois was very nearly 25,000—or 22,000 at least. Of these, he calculated that the Senecas numbered two-fifths, or about 9,000 to 10,000; the Cayugas and Onondagas together, about 6,000 to 6,500; the Oneidas about 3,500; and the Mohawks—including a clan allied to them known as the "River Indians"—about 4,500; and the Tuscaroras—a remnant of the once powerful tribe of that name, formerly living in the western Carolinas, who had been received and adopted into the Six Nations—at from 500 to 600 souls. This estimate was probably excessive, because in Sir William

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Johnson's papers, under date of the year 1753, appears an estimate of the numbers of these Indians, in which he places the total at about 19,000, maintaining generally almost exactly the same proportions, tribe for tribe, as those stated by Captain Joncaire. It may be a question as to which of the two had the better means of information. Sir William Johnson derived his estimate from detailed statements made to him by chiefs of all the tribes, and of the different clans in each tribe. It was not an exact census, as that term is understood in modern practise, but it came as near to a census as was possible in the circumstances. At the same time, Joncaire had unusual facilities for ascertaining the numbers, or any other facts that he desired to obtain concerning the Iroquois.

Joncaire was a characteristic product of the times in which he lived and the circumstances under which he had his being.

Parkman, historian *par excellence* of the French *régime* in North America, frequently refers to Joncaire's activity among the Indians. But he seems to merge two individuals in one. For example, he makes a Joncaire busy among the Senecas around Niagara as early as 1704, at the beginning of Queen Anne's War; and then prolongs his career

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until the downfall of French power in 1759-60. Besides, he speaks of him as "Chabert Joncaire," and says "he was the half-breed son of a French officer, by a Seneca squaw." The facts are as follows: The first of the name to figure prominently in the New World was Jean François Joncaire. He was the son of a subaltern officer of French colonial troops and a full-blood white man. Born about 1682 in France, he was brought by his parents to Canada when about nine years of age—say 1691. His father was a "pioneer officer" or military engineer, and was employed at fort-building and road-making. In a raid against the settlements on the Richelieu early in King William's War a party of Senecas captured young Joncaire and took him to one of their villages in western New York (the present Canandaigua). They adopted him and he lived with them until the interchange of captives a year or so after the Peace of Ryswick. He was then about eighteen years old. He attracted the attention of Cadillac, then commanding the French forces in the Lake region. Through Cadillac's influence he was sent to the Jesuit Academy or Seminary at Quebec for a time, but completed his education in a school of Recollet Friars at Montreal. For some reason he always opposed the Jesuits.

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Early in Queen Anne's War Joncaire, then about twenty-two, was employed as agent or emissary among the western Iroquois—mainly the Senecas and Cayugas. He spoke their language to perfection, and he also knew half a dozen other Indian tongues or dialects. From 1703 or 1704 until the capture of Fort Niagara in 1759, his activity among the western Indians was incessant, and his field of operations ranged from the banks of the Genesee to those of the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Sault Ste. Marie, and the faraway shores of Lake Superior and the Red River of the North. It was a wonderful career; a career that ended only in his seventy-eighth year, and with the fate of French rule in Canada.

About 1714 he took to wife the half-breed daughter of a French trader named Chaubert—or "Chabert," as Parkman spells it—by a Seneca squaw. She bore to him a son, whom he named Chaubert Joncaire. This was the one who—nearly forty years later—commanded the fort at Little Niagara in 1759. This first wife died not long after giving birth to Chaubert Joncaire. The old captain placed the boy in the hands of the Recollet Friars and gave him the best education French Canada could afford. In 1736, when fifty-four years old or thereabouts, Captain



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Joncaire married Mlle. Clauzun, half-breed daughter of the Chevalier de Clauzun by a Huron woman, said to have been the aunt of the famous half-breed Chief Anasthase, who commanded the Indians at the defeat of Braddock.

Mlle. Clauzun bore to him a son, whom he named for her—Jean François Clauzun-Joncaire.

We have given so much space to the history of Captain Joncaire because he was the only Frenchman whose influence among the Iroquois Sir William dreaded, and because his importance as a factor of French power in Canada for nearly sixty of its most thrilling years has been neglected by historians.

He was a man of medium stature, iron constitution, vehement temperament, and the most dauntless courage. His dislike of the Jesuits got him into trouble more than once, and they succeeded on one occasion in inducing the Governor-General to try him by court-martial. But he was triumphantly acquitted and lived to witness the confusion of his enemies.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Stone (vol. i, pp. 29-32) speaks of Joncaire as "a Jesuit Brother." This is an error into which Stone was probably led by his knowledge of the fact that Joncaire was educated at the Jesuit Academy of Quebec. He was undoubtedly a zealous Roman Catholic, but never a member of the Order

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But whether his estimate or that of Sir William Johnson be correct, the difference is not material to the subject under discussion.

Turning now to the Indians under French influence or control, we find that they included all the tribes east of the Mississippi, north of the Ohio and north of the Great Lakes, and the New York frontier to the Atlantic seaboard. The principal of these tribes were the St. Regis, Adirondacks, St. Francis, and Abenakis in Lower Canada and the extreme northern part of the present State of New York; the powerful tribes of the Ottawas and the Hurons, who inhabited the rich country bounded by Lake Erie on the south, Lake Huron on the west, and the Ottawa River on the northeast; the Mississago or Michigan Indians; the Mackinaws, or Mackinaes—a small tribe—and the Saginaws, who inhabited the northern part of what is now Indiana and the southern peninsula of Michigan; the Winnebagos and Menominees of Wisconsin, together with a branch of the powerful Chipewewa tribe, who inhabited the northern peninsula of Michigan and Wisconsin in the neigh-

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of Jesuits. The academies of that sect educated many laymen or secular pupils. In fact, when Joneaire was a student there were no other institutions in Canada where the higher branches were taught.

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borhood of Fort Mackinaw or Mackinac; the Pottawottomis, Kickapoos, Sauks, and a mixed tribe then known as the Wabash Indians, inhabiting what is now eastern Illinois and southern Indiana.

The total number of these Indians in direct communication or in close alliance with the French was estimated as high as 90,000 in 1752. This, which was Joncaire's estimate, is perhaps an exaggeration, but for present purposes it is not necessary to discuss that point. This estimate of 90,000 French Indians appears in St. Martin's *History of New France*,<sup>1</sup> an old work compiled during the French possession of the country, and published in Paris a few years afterward, and it is given on the authority of Joncaire. Besides the Indians above enumerated, there were at that time in Ohio the powerful tribes of the Shawnees, Miamis, and the Wyandots, besides a considerable clan of the Delawares, who had emigrated from Pennsylvania and settled at and about the forks of the Muskin-

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<sup>1</sup> Father St. Martin may be termed the last of the great Jesuits of Canada. Born in Quebec, 1699, and educated as a Jesuit priest, he began mission work among the Hurons and Ottawas in 1721 or 1722. When Sir William Johnson visited Detroit in 1761, Father St. Martin was at the Huron mission near by, and the baronet paid him a visit, which will be further noticed in this work.

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gum River and in the valleys of the Tuscarawas and Walhonding Rivers.

For some reason the French had never taken the pains to put themselves *en rapport* with the Ohio Indians that they did with those farther west and north. We have never seen any explanation of this omission. There was apparently no reason for it, because at any time prior to the conquest of Canada the French were the only white people who had access to the Ohio Indians on any friendly terms whatsoever, and most of the trade of the Shawnees, Wyandots, and Miamis was carried on with the French, from whom they obtained guns, ammunition, cutlery, cooking utensils, blankets, etc., almost exclusively, at the French trading-posts of Presque Isle, Cuyahoga, Maumee, and Detroit. Prior to 1748 no English or Colonial trader had crossed the Allegheny Mountains. In fact, prior to that time no Englishman or colonist had crossed the range except a few daring hunters like Gist, Grady, and Post—and these had to carry their lives in their hands.

But, apart from numerical considerations, apart from the genius of the French in ingratiating themselves into the good graces of the Indians, apart from the tremendous leverage of the clerical power exercised by the Jesuit

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Fathers, and apart from the ineptness of the English colonists in dealing with the Indians, there was still another factor of organic difference between the English and French systems on this continent, which was, perhaps, more important than all the others—at least it was a factor which gave a quick mobility and a constant vitality to the French power that were totally wanting in the English Colonial system. The thirteen English colonies, at the beginning of the old French war, were all autonomous, semi-independent, self-governing commonwealths. Each had its governor, its council or assembly elected by the people, and everything that it did or that was done in its name must be the subject of discussion and legislation. Then, among the several colonies also was a good deal of bickering, of jealousy, and in some cases vexatious disputes about boundaries and jurisdictions leading up to the very threshold of internecine war. For these reasons the English colonies were indolent and procrastinating in the conception of any operations that required united action, and even when the difficulties of conception and design had been overcome, they were, if possible, slower in execution.

On the other hand, the French *régime* in Canada was a solid, compact body. There

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was no representative government nor the semblance of one. The Governor-General at Quebec was within his domain a monarch as absolute as the Bourbon king at Versailles. His word was law and his orders gospel. Every able-bodied Frenchman in Canada was at all times a soldier *in esse* or *in posse*. He was constantly enrolled in what was termed the Canadian militia,<sup>1</sup> and his term of liability

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<sup>1</sup> Garneau, in his *Histoire du Canada*, quotes Montcalm as saying: "The Canadian militia are better soldiers than the American provincials, man for man. But they are too few; and when they are once in the field there is no reserve from which to recruit their ranks." This remark is worth consideration. The French Canadian is always brave. He is hardy and can live on a diet that would starve an American. He is inured to all possible rigors of climate. The military system that prevailed under French rule in Canada made him at least a half-regular soldier all the time. In war every company commander of Canadian militia was a French regular officer. The "habitans" could hold only subaltern rank. Every company had a French regular drill-sergeant. Their discipline and regulations in every respect were those of the regular troops. They never mutinied or deserted and seldom complained; if they did their shrift was short. They were the soldiers of a despotic government and they knew it.

On the other hand the American Provincial troops were volunteers, freemen; and they carried a good deal of their democracy into the field with them. While they marched and fought well and endured marvelous fatigues and privations at times, they were always prompt to find fault if any was to be found. It was impossible to bring them up—or down—to the regular standard of discipline. More than one British officer who ordered a provincial soldier to be flogged fell with



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to service was from the age of sixteen years anywhere to decrepitude. Moreover, the male sex largely predominated in the white population of Canada, the proportion being, in the average for the 160 years between the advent of Samuel Champlain and the downfall of French power in 1760, as two to one.

In a word, French Canada may be said to have been under perpetual martial law. All the conceptions and designs were secretly planned in the palace of the Governor-General at Quebec. All the orders were issued without publicity, and such was the prevailing discipline in all grades of society and throughout the local military force, that the execution of these plans and designs was always as swift as their consideration had been secret. It does not seem that any contrast of systems could be more perfectly antipodal than this, or that any comparison of methods could exhibit wider extremes.

Thus far we have dealt only with the white people and the Indians proper, but in Canada there was another element which did not exist

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a bullet in his back at the next battle or skirmish. From the purely disciplinary point of view there is every reason to agree with the sentiment that Garneau quotes from Montcalm. But judging by results, wherever the Canadian militia and the American provincials came together, neither one supported by regulars, history does not verify Montcalm's theory.

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to any extent in the English colonies. That was the element of the half-breeds. At the time when the Marquis Duquesne became Governor-General, the half-breed or mixed-race population of French Canada was nearly as numerous as the white race itself. These half-breeds, the offspring of French traders and soldiers by Indian women, were scattered through every tribe. They were to be found in every Indian village. They were the leading race in hunting and trapping. They were the common carriers of supplies and of articles of trade and barter all over the French Northwest. They were a brave, active, indefatigable, and intelligent race. In peace, they carried the name and the influence of France to the remotest Indian tribes; in war, they were, under the peculiar conditions that prevailed, more formidable in combat than the French regulars themselves, and more effective than the full-blood Indians, combining, as they did, the disciplinary aptitude of the one with the subtle woodcraft of the other. As a rule, in the campaigns they were not grouped in military bodies of their own or by themselves, but were distributed among the Indians, whom they instructed by their superior knowledge and encouraged by their unfailing example. It is hardly too much to say

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that at the period under discussion the race of French Canadian half-breeds formed the most important factor of the military strength of France in North America. Under such conditions, France and England, with their respective American colonies, began about the end of 1754 their final struggle for absolute supremacy on this continent.

The hope of the American colonists that the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle would inaugurate another long peace, like that which intervened between the end of Queen Anne's War in 1714 and the beginning of King George's in 1743, had proved illusory. The ink was hardly dry on the treaty of 1748 when the French began measures for carrying out a plan long cherished. This plan contemplated nothing less than the seizure of all the country west of the Alleghenies, the "hinterland," as modern diplomatists say, of the English colonies. The English had always nominally claimed this back country south of the Great Lakes and parallel with the Atlantic front of their colonies, to the banks of the Mississippi. But they had never made the slightest effort to settle it, to open trade within its borders, or even to explore it.

The French, on the contrary, had explored it nearly a hundred years before the period of

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which we now write (1754). They had established numerous trading-posts and a few small villages, such as Old Vincennes within the present State of Indiana, Kaskaskia in Illinois, and St. Charles and St. Genevieve in Missouri. They had established several routes through this region between Canada and their settlements at the mouth of the Mississippi, now Louisiana. One of these routes was from the head of Lake Michigan to the Illinois River, and thence down that stream and the Mississippi to New Orleans. Another was up the Maumee to its head waters, thence by portage to the head waters of the Wabash, and so on down. Another was from their trading-post at Cuyahoga to the head waters of the Miami, thence down that stream to the Ohio. In short, their traders, priests, and voyageurs had, for more than half a century, permeated the region, forming alliances with the Indian tribes, converting many of them to the Catholic faith, marrying their women, supplying them with firearms and ammunition, and practising, in short, all the arts of French colonization—or rather, of French occupation.

In any struggle that might occur between France and England for the actual possession and control of this vast territory, it is there-

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fore apparent that the French must have a very great initial advantage. And this advantage was enhanced by the fact that the French, from their places of arms in Canada, could communicate with all parts of the region by water, or through a level and easily traversed country. The English, on the other hand, could reach it only by long marches over difficult mountains, where they would have to cut their roads as they advanced, and where their columns and their supply-trains would be beset at every step by the lurking savage allies of the French. In the first part of his reign Louis XV neglected the French colonies in America. His great-grandfather, Louis XIV, throughout his long reign, made them the objects of his especial solicitude. But the neglect and, to some extent, the oppressive regulations of trade and immigration in the first thirty years of the reign of Louis XV had seriously weakened the French power in Canada. Moreover, Louis XV had made Canada a sort of penal colony; not, indeed, for common criminals, but a place of exile for officers who fought duels or failed to pay their debts, for broken-down noblemen; in short, for all classes of genteel offenders not quite bad enough for the Bastille.

Among other things, this had caused an

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actual decrease of the white population. When Louis XIV died, in 1715, there were at least 30,000 white men in Canada; whereas, when the Marquis Duquesne assumed the Governor-Generalship, he reported only 22,000. Prior to Duquesne all the Governors-General during the reign of Louis XV had been mere creatures of the court, possessing neither aptitude nor ambition for the performance of their duties, or the extension of French power and influence. The appointment of Duquesne itself was a change of policy, from the halting, the indecisive, and the weak to the aggressive, the determined, and the strong. This change of policy was due mainly, if not wholly, to the influence of Madame de Pompadour, who, since her alliance with Louis, in 1745, had never ceased her efforts to arouse his interest in the vast possessions of France in the New World, and at last her eloquence and tact had brought the luxurious and careless monarch to something like a sense of his obligations.

Simultaneously with the selection of the Marquis Duquesne to succeed M. de la Galissonière as Governor-General, Louis XV began quietly to prepare for another war. All ships of war on the stocks at Toulon, Brest, l'Orient, Rochefort, and La Rochelle



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were ordered to be pushed to completion at the earliest date. Vessels in need of repair were ordered to be thoroughly overhauled, and all defects made good. Twelve thousand additional seamen and marines were ordered to be recruited for the fleet. All the military and naval arsenals of the country were filled with munitions. The regular regiments were ordered to be recruited up to the maximum establishment. Most significant of all, ten regiments of regulars, comprising some of the oldest and most famous *corps d'élite* in the French army, were ordered to be in readiness for service beyond the seas. Of these, seven were intended for Canada and three for the East Indies.

Those destined for Canada were the regiments of Artois, of Bearn, of Languedoc, of Guienne, of Burgundy, of Picardy, and the famous Regiment de la Reine. Under the system of organization prevailing in the French army at that time, the full war strength of an infantry regiment of the line was twelve companies of 103 of all ranks each, with eight field and staff officers, or a total of 1,244 to the regiment. But when sent on foreign service two companies were left at home to form a depot for recruiting and training purposes, so that the

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actual strength in the field would be a maximum of 1,038. In addition to these infantry regiments, Louis ordered four companies (batteries) of light artillery and a siege-train to be in readiness for Canadian service. The batteries were of six guns each (light 8-pounders or howitzers) and 140 men.

The siege-train had twelve heavy guns (12- and 18-pounders) and 280 heavy artillerists. At first Walsh's regiment of the Irish Brigade—the selfsame men who, seven years before, had stemmed the English tide and turned the fortunes of the day at Fontenoy—was included in the Canadian contingent. But for some reason, they were sent to reenforce La Bourdonnais and Lally at Pondicherry in the East Indies. However, the total strength of the Canadian reenforcement was about 7,500, and it was made up of the best troops in the French regular army.

The sending of French regular regiments of territorial titles to Canada or anywhere beyond seas was itself a remarkable innovation. Hitherto the French regulars employed in Canada had been regiments specially recruited for colonial service. They were, in fact, organized in a manner quite similar to the "Foreign Legion" of our times. They were, of course, regular troops in every sense;

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borne on the army list under the head of "Corps de la Marine et des Colonies," and their officers held equivalent and interchangeable rank with the line regiments of territorial title.

These preparations began in 1752. Duquesne was appointed to succeed la Gallissonnière in 1751, and went immediately to Canada.<sup>1</sup> But on arriving there, he requested the latter to hold the office a few months in order that he (Duquesne) might have opportunity to make a personal survey of the frontiers and of the general situation incognito. Early in 1752 Duquesne, accompanied only by Captain Joncaire, Captain Beaujeu (who subsequently commanded the French and Indians at the defeat of Braddock), together with half a dozen half-breed trailers and hunters, journeyed from Presque Isle (now Erie, Pa.) to the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela

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<sup>1</sup> Madame d'Hausset says that Duquesne's instructions were in Madame de Pompadour's handwriting, and all that the king had to do with them was to sign his name. She also says that when Duquesne was leaving Versailles, de Pompadour sent for him and gave him a magnificent seal ring, the seal of which was cut in an immense ruby. "Now," she said, "Monsieur le Marquis, I want you to put that seal on articles of capitulation for Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. France must be supreme in the New World and you must make her so." It would appear that the gracious madame gave the gallant marquis a large contract.

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Rivers, and indicated the spot where the fort afterward named for him should be built.

There is nothing in history to show that the English Government or any of the colonial governments had adequate knowledge of these tremendous preparations; and their first intimation of the French scheme was in the fall of 1753, when Captain Joncaire established a fort at Venango, the confluence of French Creek with the Allegheny River. This was the third in a chain of posts hugging the western slope of the Allegheny Mountains, and designed by Duquesne to cut the English off from the Ohio Valley. The first of the posts was Presque Isle, the second Fort Le Boeuf, thirteen miles south of the former, and at the head of canoe navigation on French Creek; Venango, the third; and they were calculated to serve as intermediate stations between Lake Erie and the grand fortress to be built at the head of the Ohio.

In our time it is difficult to believe that such secrecy with regard to such portentous movements could be maintained. Nowadays every nation knows all about every other nation's army, its navy, and its movements with either or both. But in those days, under the Bourbon rule in France, absolute secrecy was possible. No outsider could get within

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gunshot of a French dockyard or arsenal. Men employed in them were under oath not to divulge anything. If they did divulge, it was rated high treason, and punishable by death. Thus it happened that the French were able to penetrate far into territory claimed by the British, establish lines of communication, and build substantial forts without the English knowing anything about it, and all this in a time of profound peace.

At last the British Government awoke to the fact that things were going wrong in the American colonies. Tidings of the disasters on the Virginia frontier—of Trent's surrender of the fort at the head of the Ohio, and of Washington's capitulation at Fort Necessity—reached England in August, 1754. These tidings were so bad that they infused a spasm of energy into even the ridiculous ministry of the absurd Duke of Newcastle. But, after all, it was not the Duke of Newcastle who really acted. At that time the Captain-General and commander-in-chief of the British army was William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland. He had the additional advantage of being the king's favorite son. And he was unquestionably the best soldier—if not the only one—that the House of Hanover has produced. Cumberland did not wait upon the moods and

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tenses of the fat-witted Prime Minister. As Captain-General, he had control of military affairs in the colonies as well as in England in time of war—and this was certainly such a time.

Therefore, without consulting the ministry or any one else—unless, perhaps, his father, the king—Cumberland ordered the Forty-fourth Regiment of Foot, Colonel Sir Peter Halket, and the Forty-eighth Regiment, Colonel Thomas Dunbar, to be put in instant readiness for service in the American colonies. He also sent letters of service in the king's name to General Sir William Pepperell and Colonel William Shirley—then Governor of Massachusetts — authorizing and directing them to raise two regiments of infantry in the colonies, to be known as Royal Provincial or Royal American regiments, to be enrolled in the British regular army list, and to be paid and provided for by the king the same as any other British regulars. These orders bore date of September 19, 1754—less than four weeks after the news of the disastrous result of Washington's campaign reached London.

Other provisions were made by the Duke of Cumberland for the employment of Provincial troops, and of such Indians as might adhere to the English cause. On the whole,



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Cumberland calculated that his scheme would serve to put in the field in the American colonies a force of at least 14,000 men by the opening of spring in 1755, and of this force he intended—including the small garrisons already in the colonies—that about 4,000 should be British regulars. It should be remarked at this point that the numerical strength of the British regular army in 1754 was at its lowest ebb. After the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle—which the French always called a truce—the silly Duke of Newcastle imagined that the millennium had come, and, if he could have had his way, would probably have disbanded the British army altogether.

Be this as it may, a man of different mold was directing this particular affair. Without going into details, the Duke of Cumberland selected Major-General Sir Edward Braddock to command the British troops destined for the American colonies, and at the same time made him commander-in-chief of all the British forces in North America—regular, Provincial, and Indian. After arranging for transportation of his troops, ordnance, and supplies, Braddock himself, with his staff, sailed from the Downs in the famous old *Centurion*—which had been Anson's flagship in that wonderful cruise round the world a dec-

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ade before—on the 21st of December, 1754, and reached Hampton Roads after a most tempestuous passage, the 20th of February, 1755. The convoy of transports, with the troops, ordnance stores, and general supplies, sailed from Cork the 14th of January, 1755, were dispersed at sea, and, as they arrived from day to day in the Chesapeake, were worked up the Potomac to Alexandria, where the last of them, the Severn, with four companies of the Forty-eighth—Dunbar's regiment—on board, arrived the 15th of March.

Detailed description of Braddock's campaign would be foreign to the scope of this little book. But on his arrival in this country he did some things in his capacity as commander-in-chief which do more credit to his memory than does the battle in which he fell. Chief among these things was the appointment of Sir William Johnson, in the name and by authority of the king, to be General Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the whole of British North America. This appointment was made in March, 1755, less than a month after General Braddock's arrival in Hampton Roads.

The story of Braddock's fatal expedition is known to most well-read American school-boys. They know it, not because it was Brad-

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dock's expedition or Braddock's defeat, but because the name and fame of George Washington are intimately associated with it. No attempt to describe it will be made here. Suffice to say that on the 10th of June, 1755, Braddock's army left Fort Cumberland 2,150 strong, as stated in the journal of Captain Orme, of the general's staff. This force consisted of 1,400 British regulars, about 500 Virginia Provincials, and a miscellaneous force of 250 more, composed of three independent companies, in the king's pay, each about 60 strong; a small troop of Provincial Light Horse from Virginia—about 30 men—10 guides, and 30 sailors from the *Centurion*, sent along to help handle the artillery of the expedition. It was a tedious march, during which not more than ten miles a day was traversed, by reason of the delay in making a road practicable for the wagon-train and the heavier arms.

Braddock, fretted by these delays, finally, by the advice of Sir Peter Halket, Captain Orme, and his special Provincial aide-de-camp, Major George Washington, determined to leave the heavy baggage and guns behind with a guard of 700 men under Colonel Dunbar, and to push forward, by forced marches, with a column in light march-

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ing order, composed of 1,000 British regulars and 400 Virginia Provincials. This column started the 19th of June, taking with it eight of the lightest guns with their tumbrils; the provisions—twenty days' rations—being carried on packhorses. The rest, so far as this little volume has space to deal with the subject, is soon told. On the 9th of July, Braddock, with his column of 1,400, crossed the Monongahela a few miles above its confluence with the Allegheny forming the Ohio River.

Here the British column fell into an ambuscade of French and Indians under Captain Beaujeu of the French regular army, and in less than an hour was hopelessly defeated, utterly routed, and almost annihilated. English historians have described it as the most complete disaster that ever befell a British force. General Braddock and all the field-officers present were either killed or wounded. The total loss out of 1,460 officers and men was 456 killed outright or mortally wounded, and 521 wounded, many of whom were so disabled that they fell that night or the next day under the tomahawks of the pursuing savages. Of the total force of 1,460, only 483 escaped fit for duty—and many of these received slight wounds. The Virginia Pro-

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vincials did their best to cover the retreat, but they, too, were overwhelmed.

When the wreck of Braddock's army reached the reserve under Colonel Dunbar, the latter partook of their panic, and a disgraceful flight back to Fort Cumberland ensued, baggage, supplies, cannon, and everything else that could impede flight being abandoned. It was the greatest defeat ever suffered by the whites in frontier warfare—greater even than St. Clair's—and the most wonderful victory ever won by the Indians. We have noted that Braddock's force was 1,460 of all ranks. The force of French and Indians that destroyed it has been variously estimated. Doubtless the most accurate statement is that of Captain Joncaire, who organized the Indian part of the force, and who would have commanded in the battle but for an accident that happened to him early in the morning of the day on which it occurred.

Just after daylight he mounted his pony and was riding at top speed through a new clearing full of logs and stumps, when the pony stumbled, throwing the captain over his head. The result was a dislocated left shoulder and severe contusions in the head. He was carried to the fort unconscious, and remained in that condition several hours—being,

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in fact, roused from his stupor by the triumphant yells of his Indians returning from their field of victory. He says in his journal that the force actually in contact with Braddock's army was composed of 600 Indians, 20 cadets (half-breed boys under training for military service), and 16 white Frenchmen, of whom 7 were regular officers—a total of 636.

The 600 Indians, he says, represented as many as ten tribes, it having been his policy in organizing the force to take a small number of picked warriors from each tribe, partly with a view to stimulate rivalry, and partly to identify as many different tribes as possible with the French cause. He gives a list embodying an exact statement of the number present from each tribe, and this list includes 80 Senecas and 18 Cayugas; so that one-sixth of the Indians who defeated Braddock belonged to the traditional "friends of the English," the Iroquois! The principal chief and commander of all the Indians was the celebrated Huron half-breed Anasthose, who was said to be a grandson of Count de Frontenac. The second-in-command was Pontiac, then a young war-chief of the Ottawas. The total loss of the French and Indians in Braddock's defeat was 3 white men (includ-



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ing Captain Beaujeu) killed and 2 wounded; 2 cadets wounded; 7 Indians killed and 17 wounded—a total of 10 killed and 21 wounded.

Winthrop Sargent, in his *History of Braddock's Expedition*, says that the force under Captain Beaujeu consisted of "600 Indians, 146 Canadian militia, 72 French regulars, and 20 cadets—total, 838." But Joncaire says that all but 16 of the French regulars and all the Canadian militia were retained at the fort by Captain Contrecoeur—"who," he says, rather sardonically, "did not imagine that success was possible, and was among the last to realize the magnitude and glory of the victory. He had made all arrangements for a capitulation with the honors of war!"

Perhaps Joncaire was prejudiced against Contrecoeur. The latter was only a captain of infantry of the line, and the 72 French regulars at Fort Duquesne were simply his own company of the regiment of Languedoc. Joncaire had long held the commission, pay, and allowances of a "First Captain of Marine Infantry" in the regular army of France, and was borne on the "extra" or "special-service list" of his regiment—that of Toulon. A "First Captain of Marine Infantry" was, by title, only a captain, but the real rank was equivalent to that of major in the British

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service. He therefore ranked both Contrecoeur and St. Pierre, who were only captains of infantry of the line. But, as he had never actually served with his regiment, and as his rank was honorary rather than substantive, they were always disputing his precedence over them. However, at the time of Braddock's defeat, Joncaire was recognized at "Government House" in Quebec as the commander of the French and Indian forces in the Ohio Valley. He was over seventy years old at the time of the accident above related, and he never again had much use of his left arm. He never attempted field service after the Braddock campaign.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> During the rest of the war Captain Joncaire made his headquarters most of the time at Fort Niagara, where he was captured in 1759 when that stronghold surrendered to Sir William Johnson's army. In his "list of prisoners" Sir William describes him as "captain of marines," and in the same list appears the name of his half-breed son, "Chabeare" (Chaubert) Joncaire, who commanded a company of half-breed rangers. He was sent to England with the other captured officers, and upon his release in 1762 returned to Canada. He settled on his farm near St. Catharines, where he died in 1775, over ninety years old.

Sir William went to Niagara in 1766 to hold a council with delegates of the Northwestern Indians who had recently been engaged in Pontiac's war and now wanted to make peace. It may be mentioned as a curious fact that these Indians, who all belonged either to the Algonquin or the Ojibway (Chippewa) grand divisions of the Indian race, could not be per-

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Unquestionably the general trend of public opinion in this country has, for nearly a century and a half, been unfavorable to General Braddock, and prejudiced toward his memory. We have neither time nor space here to debate the question whether public opinion in this instance is right or wrong, but whatever his faults may have been, Braddock lacked neither breadth of perception, boldness of design, nor bravery in execution. It is worth while to say here that George Washington, who was his aide-de-camp, and stood by him when he breathed his last, never, in all his writings or his conversations, had

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sueded to come to Johnson Hall because that would compel them to pass through the Iroquois tribes, their hereditary foes. Therefore Sir William had to meet them at Niagara. His journal during this conference contains the following entry:

“ . . . Had the pleasure of a visit from the venerable Captain Joncaire, now past seventy (eighty), but hale and hearty and a most loyal subject of our king. We had a long talk in Iroquois, as I knew no French and he no English. He asked me to give his two sons, ‘Chabeare’ (Chaubert) and Jean François (Clauzun), something to do in our Indian service. I found them to be quarter-breeds, their mother having been a half-breed. Discovering that they were very capable fellows and loyal, I appointed one of them, Jean François, interpreter and assistant agent at St. Mary’s [Sault Ste. Marie], and ‘Chabeare’ in the same capacity at our new post of Green Bay among the Menominees. They were all very grateful and declared their content with British rule.”

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anything but the kindest words to say of Edward Braddock. He was undoubtedly a martinet, rough in manner, and, perhaps, severe if not cruel in his methods of discipline, but he was nevertheless a thoroughbred soldier and a skilful tactician, within the teachings of the school in which he had been trained, and a general strategist of far more than ordinary ability.

After his arrival in this country he lost no time. Upon reaching Hampton Roads, almost his first act was to summon a council of Colonial governors to meet him at Alexandria, Virginia. The governors who accepted the invitation and attended this council were those of Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The other colonies, except South Carolina and Georgia, which took no part in the conference, were represented by their lieutenant-governors. Sir William Johnson was present at this conference by special invitation. He and Benjamin Franklin were the only members of it who were not governors or lieutenant-governors of colonies. At this conference General Braddock outlined the strategy which he had planned for his campaign at large. He proposed four expeditions. One of these was to be carried out in Nova Scotia under the

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governor of that province—Lawrence—with the object of finally expelling the French from that peninsula, but it had no direct connection with the other three projects, and need not be considered here.

The main projects were: first, an expedition to be commanded by Braddock himself for the reduction of Fort Duquesne and expulsion of the French from the Ohio Valley; second, an expedition to be commanded by Governor Shirley of Massachusetts for the reduction of Fort Niagara, with the ultimate object of cutting French communication between Lake Ontario and the upper lakes; the third was an expedition for the reduction of Crown Point, then the southernmost fortress of the French on the New York frontier. As commander of this last-mentioned expedition he named Sir William Johnson, at the same time appointing him, as has already been remarked, General Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the whole of British North America in the name of the king. The scope of this work, as already intimated, does not admit discussion of the expeditions assigned to Braddock himself, Shirley, or Governor Lawrence of Nova Scotia, but we may find space for some detail of Sir William Johnson's expedition against Crown Point.

## Braddock's Defeat

As soon as the conference at Alexandria was over, Johnson returned as rapidly as he could to the Mohawk Valley, and immediately summoned a conference of Iroquois chiefs to meet him at Mount Johnson. With this messenger he sent a belt of wampum to each chief, informing him of the appointment he had received as the direct royal superintendent of all the North American Indians, which was a very considerable promotion over the commission he had recently held as superintendent of the Iroquois only. Upon receipt of this information the Indians did not need urging. The news, says Stone, that their brother Warragh-i-ya-gey had again been raised up to power among them, spread like wildfire. Within ten days from the date of his call for this conference, over 1,000 Indians assembled at Mount Johnson. So unprecedented and unexpected was the number present—by far the largest assemblage of Indians ever before convened—that Sir William Johnson was altogether taken by surprise, and his food-supply completely overwhelmed. He had to call in the assistance of a large number of his most prosperous neighbors for fifteen or twenty miles up and down the Mohawk Valley to help him out in this respect. On the 21st of June he opened the



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council by a speech, in which he informed the Indians that he had been delegated to command a certain expedition against a certain important fortress of the enemy, that the forces to be placed at his disposal were to be Provincial troops from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and New York, and that it was expected that about one thousand picked warriors from the Six Nations should form part of his force, to be commanded by the venerable chief sachem of the Mohawks and senior chief of all the Iroquois—Hendrick. The usual interchange of oratory then took place, after which the Indians departed for their respective castles and villages, full of enthusiasm and promising to place a thousand warriors at his disposal within six weeks or two months. So well satisfied with the results of this council was Sir William that he wrote to the Duke of Cumberland shortly after that “there are very few if any among the whole Iroquois Confederacy who, in the present dispute between the French and our Crown, do not sincerely wish us success, and are disposed to assist our arms.”

Sir William now proceeded energetically to organize his expedition. According to the original plan, the force employed was to consist of 2,500 Provincial troops from Massa-

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chusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut; 1,000 from New York, and 1,000 Indians—4,500 altogether. Before the end of July all the forces destined for the reduction of Crown Point had assembled under Sir William's command at Albany. The contingents of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York were a little in excess of the required number. New Hampshire sent 500 men organized in seven companies under command of Colonel Joshua A. Blanchard. The Massachusetts and Connecticut troops were commanded by Colonel Phineas Lyman. The only disappointment he experienced was that a little less than 600 Indians responded to the call, instead of the thousand expected. This, however, was because the quota of Senecas, which according to the population of the respective tribes had been fixed at 400, was dilatory, and, in fact, was not mobilized in time to take any active part in the campaign. This was due partly to the lingering seeds of disaffection which had been sown by the French emissaries among the Senecas during the past three years, but mainly to the fact that just at the time when Hi-o-ka-to and Captain Montour were assembling their warriors at the Falls of the Genesee—say about the middle of July—they received the stunning

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and utterly demoralizing news of Braddock's defeat, which had occurred the 9th of that month.

These tidings threw the whole of the Seneca Nation into a ferment of doubt and hesitancy, which all the eloquence of Montour and all the stalwart bullying of Hi-o-ka-to were powerless to overcome. All they could do was to send runners to Sir William, informing him of the state of affairs. Montour persuaded perhaps twenty-five or thirty Seneca warriors to accompany him, and joined Johnson's forces at Saratoga, and they were the only Senecas engaged in the expedition. Hi-o-ka-to stayed behind, declaring his determination to bring the allotted contingent of Senecas along if, as he expressed it, he "had to drag every mother's son of them by the scalp-lock!" On the 6th of August Sir William decided not to wait any longer for the Seneca contingent, and sent Colonel Lyman forward with the New York and Massachusetts troops to erect a fort on the bank of the Hudson River at the south end of the great portage between that river and Lake George, to which he gave the name of Fort Edward. / At this time an unfortunate controversy arose between Sir William and Governor Shirley, growing out of the Govern-

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or's pique at what he considered some lack of suitable personal attention toward him on Johnson's part. This controversy resulted in considerable correspondence of a more or less acrimonious character, which our present limits of space preclude us from reproducing. Suffice to say in general terms that the whole affair grew out of the personal vanity of Governor Shirley brought, as it was, in contact with Sir William's matter-of-fact, businesslike way of transacting affairs.

On the 8th of August Sir William himself set out from Albany with the stores, baggage-train, and artillery and the rest of the troops, including four companies of the New York regiment, which, coming from Dutchess and Ulster counties down the river, were a little behind those raised in Albany County. This force was accompanied by the Chief Hendrick with a hundred and fifty Mohawk warriors, among whom was Joseph Brant, then a mere boy of thirteen years, but, notwithstanding his extreme youth, able to carry a light gun (a small fowling-piece presented to him by Sir William) that he had, and serving in the ranks.

Sir William arrived at Fort Edward on the 14th of August, where he was joined by

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250 more Indians, making the total number about 400; and afterward 120 more came in by small squads. The New England and New York troops were full of ardor and impatient of delay. The news of Braddock's defeat had not only not disheartened them, but had made them all the more anxious to be led against Crown Point. They considered this expedition a measure for the defense of their firesides. One of the Provincial officers, belonging to the Massachusetts contingent, Major Thomas Williams, wrote a letter to his wife, in which he said, among other things: "I endeavor to keep myself calm and quiet under our slow progress, and await God's time, but the advance seems very slow." Colonel Lyman was equally restive under the delay. Indeed, a day or two before Sir William's arrival at Fort Edward, he had set 300 of his men to work to cut a road across the hills to Fort Ann, supposing that the army would proceed against Crown Point by way of Wood Creek and the head of Lake Champlain.

Sir William, on his arrival, called a council of war to decide upon the best route, and the result of this council was that Colonel Lyman's movement was countermanded. A scouting party of forty soldiers, under Captain John Stark, with thirty Indians, was then

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sent out to reconnoiter the whole country in the vicinity of Lake George. When these scouts returned another council of war was held on the 22d of August, in which the officers, upon hearing their report, unanimously decided that the Lake George route appeared to them the most eligible, and that it ought to be immediately adopted as the plan of campaign. In a previous chapter we have mentioned that about the close of King George's War, seven years before, Sir William had made a road from the head of Lake George to Fort Edward or Glens Falls, but this road had been neglected. Many trees had fallen across it, and it had to be cleared out. So 2,000 men were sent forward to restore this road, with orders also to erect at the head of the lake a fort, with suitable buildings in which to store arms and other munitions of war when they should arrive.

Then, leaving Colonel Lyman to await the rest of the troops, and the New Hampshire Provincials to complete and garrison the fort, Sir William set out on the 26th of August with 3,400 men for the lake—a distance of about fifteen miles—and reached it at dusk on the 28th. After some reconnoitering he selected on the 29th a position for his camp which was on a bluff shore of the lake,



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flanked at both ends by thickly wooded swamps where small creeks emptied in. The French had always called this lake "St. Sacrament," and Sir William now solemnly changed it to Lake George, "not only," as he said, "in honor of His Majesty the King, but to assure his undoubted dominion here." Although Lake George had been used for many years as a means of communication, both for warlike and commercial purposes, between Canada and Albany, yet its shores were still a primeval forest, where no house had ever been built or a spot of land cleared. The troops immediately set about clearing a place for a camp capable of sheltering 5,000 men, and providing housing for their military stores.

Meanwhile, Colonel Lyman, as soon as all the dilatory troops arrived, left at Fort Edward a garrison of 250 Connecticut Provincials and five companies of the New York regiment,<sup>1</sup> and with the rest of his force joined the camp at Lake George on September 3d, bringing with him all the heavy artillery.

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<sup>1</sup> We have used the term "regiment" in speaking of the New York contingent. But besides Schuyler's regiment of ten companies there were four independent companies, commanded by Captains Davis, Ten Eyck, Munro (Rangers), and Vrooman.

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Johnson had expected to be joined at the lake by many more warriors of the Six Nations. He expected at least 600, although he had received tidings from Hi-o-ka-to and information from Captain Montour, who had then arrived with his small detachment at his camp, that there was little hope of the full Seneca contingent of 400 being available. In the meantime, de Vaudreuil, who had just succeeded Duquesne as Governor-General of Canada, learned by papers, taken at the wreck of Braddock's army, of Shirley's proposed expedition against Niagara, and as a counter-movement he had arranged an attack upon Oswego, but learning subsequently that Sir William Johnson's expedition was advancing by way of Lake George against Crown Point, he changed his purpose. He called back the French force already on its way to Oswego, and sent them under Baron Dieskau to meet Sir William's forces.

The baron left a large force—about 1,200 men—at Crown Point, and taking with him 280 French regulars of the Regiment de la Reine, 800 Canadian militia, and between 600 and 700 Indians, proceeded up Lake Champlain and landed at the head of that lake, with the intention of marching across the country and attacking Fort Edward in Johnson's rear,

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with a view of cutting off his retreat and in the hope of thereby annihilating his army. If he should be able to accomplish this, the route to Albany and the lower settlements on the Hudson would be open and undefended. On the fourth day, however, after leaving the head of Lake Champlain, the French army found itself on the road to Lake George, instead of to Fort Edward, and Dieskau discovered through his scouts that he was only four miles from the fortified camp which Sir William Johnson had made on the bank of the lake. Here Dieskau halted and sent forward a party of Indians, under the direction of Captain de St. Pierre, to reconnoiter. In the course of their reconnaissance they encountered and killed a courier whom General Johnson had sent to warn the garrison at Fort Edward of their danger. Dieskau, discovering from this fact that Sir William was on the alert, gave the Indians under his command the choice of either attacking the fort or marching against Sir William's camp at the lake. The Indians, who never had any stomach for artillery, and having been told by a prisoner that the camp at the lake had no cannon, positively refused to attack the fort, but expressed their desire to be led against the fortified camp. Dieskau thereupon

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marched through the forests toward Lake George, and encamped that night on the banks of a small pond a little to the eastward of the Lake George road, and at the southern foot of French Mountain.

About nightfall on the 7th of September, Johnson learned through his scouts that a large body of men were marching toward his camp. Early the next morning he sent out about 800 Provincials under Colonel Ephraim Williams, and the whole force of Hendrick's Iroquois warriors, led by the venerable chief himself, to find the enemy. What we have called "a fortified camp" was simply an abatis or rough log breastwork, made by felling trees across the foot of the camp and lopping down their branches. There was no earthwork or other pretense of regular fortification, excepting that places were cleared through the log-slashing to form a kind of embrasure for the four cannon that he had with him at the lake. Dieskau, advised by his Indian scouts of the movement of Colonel Williams and Hendrick, arranged an ambuscade, and the detachment, when about two and a half miles from the camp, walked right into it, the column being led by Hendrick and his warriors. Dieskau had ordered that his men should reserve their fire until the Provin-

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cials and Iroquois were entirely within the half circle of his ambush, but before the detachment had gone that far, one of the enemy's muskets went off accidentally, whereupon the attack began. Volley after volley was poured with murderous effect upon the Indians in front and upon the left of Williams' column of Provincials. Hendrick, who was riding at the head of his column—a large, corpulent man, and wearing a brilliant uniform—formed a conspicuous mark for the enemy's bullets, and was killed at the first fire.

The venerable warrior was in his eightieth year when he fell in battle. Colonel Williams was also killed a few minutes after Hendrick, being shot through the head as he was in the act of mounting a rock in order better to direct the movements of his men, his horse having been shot under him a few minutes before. The Provincials and Indians now broke, and retreated in some confusion, the enemy following close at their heels, yelling and firing. Reaching a small pond near the road to the lake, Lieutenant-Colonel Cole of the Massachusetts Provincials succeeded in rallying two hundred or more of them in a favorable position, and stationing his men behind trees at a point where the road ran close to the



KING HENDRICK OF THE MOHAWKS.





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pond, forming a sort of defile, checked the pursuit. Sir William, as soon as he heard the firing, had sent Cole with 300 men to cover the retreat, subsequently reenforcing them with 200 more under Major Whiting. The check given the advancing enemy at this little pond—which has ever since been known in the local phrase as “Bloody Pond”—enabled the survivors of the force of Williams and Hendrick to reach the fortified camp, into which they clambered pell-mell over the fallen trees and brush, weary, dejected, and dispirited. Had Dieskau been able, as he had intended, to take advantage of the confusion produced in Sir William's camp by the arrival of these panic-stricken fugitives, and while his own men were completely flushed with success, he might possibly have made a grand rush and carried the improvised barrier or abatis by storm; although, notwithstanding the demoralization at the first onset, the subsequent proceedings indicate that even this would have been doubtful. It was not believed by the Indians and Canadians that Sir William had any artillery in his camp at the lake, but when they arrived in sight of the breastwork they saw that he had four guns mounted, whereupon they halted and took shelter in the woods. This left only the

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French regulars for attack, and before Dieskau could rally and reinspire his Indians and Canadians, the Provincials had found time in which to improve their defenses and recover from their previous demoralization.

As soon as Dieskau had rallied and brought his Canadians and Indians to the front again, the 280 French regulars attacked Sir William's flimsy defenses in the center, advancing rapidly and firing by platoons. The Provincials, however, stood firm, and the regulars, after losing about 70 men in attacking the center, were withdrawn. Dieskau then made an attack with his Canadians on the left flank of Johnson's camp, but with no better effect. Finally, discovering that there was a gap of about 20 or 25 yards between the right of the slashing which covered Johnson's camp and the bank of the thickly wooded and impassable swamp that defended his right flank, Dieskau determined upon a desperate charge of his regulars in column of platoons to get through this gap. Had this succeeded, it would have turned Johnson's right. The regulars, of whom about 210 were now left, charged at this gap as they might have charged at Fontenoy, Dieskau leading them in person. He had expected an easy victory, but now the stubbornness of the resist-

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ance and the comparative feebleness of the attacks which his Canadian militia had made filled him with forebodings. He could not bear the idea that he, the favorite pupil and at one time chief aide-de-camp to the great Marshal Saxe, should be beaten in the forests of America by an army of backwoodsmen, commanded by a farmer!

It may, perhaps, be fortunate for the destinies of the Anglo-Saxon race in this country that this, the only practicable open breach in Sir William's line of defense, was held by four companies of the New Hampshire Provincials, and they were commanded by their senior captain, who, though senior to the other captains in rank, was junior to them all in years. The four companies of New Hampshire Provincials numbered about 260 to 280 men. The fighting in the breach was, for the most part, hand-to-hand. Perhaps half of the New Hampshire men had bayonets; those who had none used the butts of their muskets, as there was no time to reload. This desperate combat lasted perhaps seven or eight minutes. At its end the French commander-in-chief, Dieskau, was mortally wounded and a prisoner. Of his 210 magnificent French regulars belonging to "de la Reine"—the most famous regiment in the

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French army—only 41 escaped unhurt. The loss of the New Hampshire Provincials was between 90 and 100 out of—say 260 to 280.

It may not be uninteresting to know that the unflinching young senior captain of the New Hampshire Provincials, who held his “embattled farmers” to their deadly work in that breach against the flower of the French regulars, was John Stark, then only twenty-seven years old. Further comment does not seem necessary.

The battle was over. Dieskau’s army, abandoning all its baggage, and many of his men throwing away their guns, fled toward Crown Point. The Provincials were extremely desirous of pursuing them, but Sir William Johnson, knowing that a large reserve had been left behind at Crown Point, and also realizing the exhausted condition of his troops, who had suffered very considerable losses, did not deem pursuit prudent, and though urged by Colonel Lyman to permit a strong advance, peremptorily forbade it, and ordered his troops to rest on their arms. In fact, Sir William himself had received a severe wound in his efforts to rally the Indians when they retreated to the breastwork after the death of Hendrick. He

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was outside the breastwork on horseback,<sup>1</sup> shouting to the Indians in their own tongue, and to a considerable extent restoring confidence and order among them. Wishing to look behind him for a moment, he put one hand upon the pommel and the other upon the cantle of his saddle, and rising up in his stirrups, he turned half round. Just as he did so a bullet from the French line in the woods struck him in the left hip back of the joint, grazing the bone, passing through the fleshy part of the hip, to the right and upward at an angle of about 45 degrees, and lodging in the large muscle just below the small of the back, making a very severe and painful, though not dangerous, flesh wound. Painful as this wound was, Sir William kept his saddle until the crisis was over. When he did dismount his left leg was quite paralyzed, and his left boot full of blood. He did not even let his

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<sup>1</sup> A curious incident occurred in this battle. Sir William had taken with him in the campaign a magnificent imported thoroughbred stallion which he used as a charger in parades, reviews, etc. He had two other horses of more common and less valuable kind that he used in battle. At the beginning of this action he had one of his orderlies take the stallion to a place near the shore of the lake where he would be, as was supposed, out of range; but a stray bullet struck the blooded stallion in the head and killed him, while the plebeian nag Sir William rode in the thick of the *mêlée* came out unhurt! The stallion was worth £1,000, the nag perhaps £20.



## Sir William Johnson

men know that he had been hit. Fortunately, it was an Indian bullet—only about half the size of the ounce-ball of the regulation musket. Curiously enough, he and the French commander, Baron Dieskau, were taken to the surgeons at the same time, and Sir William directed them to dress the wounds of his fallen antagonist before they attended to his own. The bullet that wounded Sir William—a half-ounce ball from an Indian's gun—lodged just beneath the skin at the lower end of the great muscle on the left side of the small of the back, and was easily extracted by cutting through the skin.

There was at the time considerable criticism in military circles of Sir William's failure to follow up this victory more closely, and he himself used to say in reply to these criticisms, that if he had not been disabled, the probability is that he would have yielded to the importunities of Colonel Lyman and other officers to pursue the retreating enemy. His force was considerably superior numerically to the French and Indians. The highest estimate we have ever seen of Dieskau's force was that it amounted to 1,800 men, of whom about 1,100 were whites or half-breeds—280 or 300 French regulars—and 800 Canadian militia, together with about 700 Indians. Sir

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William had under his command at the beginning of the action not less than 3,000 to 3,200 men, of whom about 500 were Indians; but he knew that a reserve of at least 1,200 good troops—regulars and Canadian militia—had been left at Crown Point; and as the distance between that place and this battle-field was less than a day's forced march, there was danger of a counter attack which, falling as it must have done upon raw troops thoroughly tired out and considerably shaken by their losses, might have proved disastrous.

Stone says that when Colonel Lyman begged that he might take the Massachusetts and the New York troops, with such of the Indians as might be rallied to follow him, and pursue the enemy, Sir William replied: "Much as I admire your spirit and honor your purpose, colonel, I have reason to expect that the reserve left at the Point will join the force we have been contending with, during the night, and then the attack on this position is likely to be renewed to-morrow. Therefore, I consider it dangerous to weaken my force by dividing it." The question whether this view of the situation was sufficient to justify his refusal of Lyman's request is, of course, purely a matter of speculation. It was one of those cases where there can be no rule of

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action except the judgment of the commanding officer on the spot. One thing is to be said of Sir William Johnson, however, and that is, in whatever capacity of life or in whatever emergency, private or public, civil or military, he was always cool and cautious, and if in any military operation he committed an error, it was always sure to be on the side of prudence. "The proof of the pudding, etc.," is exemplified in his case. He commanded two very important expeditions during the old French war—the one under consideration and the one which resulted in the capture of Fort Niagara—and it must be said of him that if he never won any great, brilliant, or startling victory, he never got whipped!

No farther advance was made by the forces under Sir William Johnson toward Crown Point. It was getting late in the season. After deducting the losses in the battle of Lake George, and taking account of the fact that most of the Indians returned to their homes soon afterward, thus reducing Johnson's force to less than 2,400 all told, it appears reasonable that he should pause at the idea of attempting to storm or even besiege a regular fortification like Crown Point with that number of men, none of whom were regu-

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lar troops, when the work itself was sure to be defended by a force very nearly equal, and likely to be largely reenforced from Canada. The cooperating colonies of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire showed no disposition to reenforce Johnson. So that on the whole we think it may justly be said that, in pursuing the course he did—that is to say, of fortifying the positions he had gained, and of making sure of his lines of communication in his rear—Sir William displayed in a marked degree that virtue which is generally described by the aphorism that “discretion is the better part of valor.” At any rate, the king and the Duke of Cumberland appeared to be perfectly satisfied with what he had achieved, because, as soon as the news of the battle of Lake George reached England, he was made a baronet of the hereditary class, and promoted to the rank of major-general in the British regular army, on the Colonial establishment.

One of the best expressions I have seen with regard to the real value of Sir William Johnson's victory at Lake George was made by Cortlandt Van Rensselaer. He said the principal value of this victory was its influence in rallying the spirits and restoring the confidence of the American colonies. Much

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had been expected from the three expeditions planned at Alexandria and sent against the French. Disappointment and sorrow had already followed Braddock's terrible defeat. A different though not less bitter feeling had been experienced at the failure of Shirley's expedition against Fort Niagara. While General Johnson had not achieved the ultimate object of his expedition—which was to take Crown Point—he had inflicted a terrible and destructive defeat upon a powerful French force, led by the best general the French had on this side of the ocean, in which that general was himself placed *hors de combat* forever. Not only were the colonies filled with rejoicing, but the influence of the triumph went over to England, and the deeds of the Provincials at Lake George became familiar to the ears of royalty and were applauded by the eloquence of orators on the floor of Parliament. The moral effects of a battle, in which the forces arrayed against each other were comparatively small, have rarely been greater or more decisive in the whole range of military annals. Viewed simply in its military aspect, the battle of Lake George was the only successful achievement in all the thirteen colonies during the campaign of 1755.

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Although General Johnson's expedition, as already remarked, failed in its ultimate object in reducing Crown Point, it still had a glamour in the brilliant success of a hard-fought and well-won pitched battle. In war success in one direction may and does often overbalance reverse or shortcoming in another. At the very least, or at the minimum of its importance, it was, after all, the one great event of the campaign of 1755. Above all, it was purely an achievement of the yeomanry of New York and New England. Not a single British regular was there, either officer or enlisted man, and certainly not the least, if not, indeed, the greatest of its values, was the lesson it taught to the military world that American Provincials could successfully face and overcome French regulars.

Sir William Johnson's wound practically disabled him for about three months, and for the rest of his life he always walked with a slight halt or limp in the left leg. However, he did not leave the camp, but continued in command, giving his personal attention to his duties. As soon as his wound was sufficiently healed to enable him to leave his bed, it was his habit to be carried about on a litter, inspecting the fortifications of the base of operations he had gained, di-



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recting the movements of scouting parties and forays into the enemy's country—in short, commanding his forces quite as actively and as efficiently as he might have done had he come out of the battle unscathed. He did not return to his home at Mount Johnson until after winter set in. Then Colonel Lyman—now promoted to the regular rank of brigadier-general on the colonial establishment—was left in command of the northern line of defenses, and no further operations were attempted until the following spring. After the death of Hendrick he was succeeded as principal sachem of the Mohawks by the elder Brant, whom we have previously called Nicklaus. In the battle at Lake George, Brant succeeded Hendrick in command of the Indians. Sir William's influence may have had something to do with this selection, because there was another prominent candidate for the succession. At this time the elder Brant may have been considered Sir William's "father-in-law," because, a little more than a year previously, he had made Brant's daughter Mary the object of his affections and mistress of his household. As to the other and more exalted distinction which Hendrick had so long held—that of senior chief of the Iroquois Confederacy, which was an



JOSEPH BRANT.

From a portrait in oil by Romney.



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elective position, not hereditary—was left vacant for twenty years, until in 1775 Joseph Brant was chosen to fill it.

Joseph Brant was present in this battle, though only thirteen years old. In his description he says: "When the firing began I was so overcome that I had to seize hold of a sapling to steady myself. But I instantly thought that such feelings were not those of a warrior, and went on loading and firing the small gun I had, the same as the others. . . . My father, seeing me standing in an open space, somewhat roughly ordered me to get behind a tree—which I hastily obeyed, though I had not before thought of taking cover."

In January, 1756, Sir William, having fully recovered from his wounds, went to New York city to lay his annual report before the Governor and confer with the Committee of Supply, whose custom it was to have him explain in detail his recommendations for Indian appropriations. We have already noted that during the campaign of 1755 some friction occurred between Sir William and Governor Shirley. After the death of Braddock, Shirley resumed the position in which the former had superseded him—that of commander-in-chief in British North America.

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He set up the singular contention that, as Sir William had been appointed and commissioned by Braddock to be General Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Large, his authority ended with Braddock's life, and must be renewed or approved by his successor!

Acting upon this theory, Shirley had, at the beginning of the year, served upon Sir William a new commission, accompanied with a mass of "instructions," all of which were unnecessary and most of which were absurd. Sir William determined now to settle the matter once for all. He replied politely to Shirley, and as he always did everything openly and aboveboard, he informed him of his intention to lay the whole affair before the king and ministry. He did this in two letters—one to Secretary Fox of the Board of Trade and the Colonies, the other to the king himself. In due time Secretary Fox addressed to him a letter containing a royal commission as "Agent, Sole Superintendent of the Six Nations and all other Indians inhabiting British territory, north of the Carolinas and the Ohio River," with a fixed salary of £600 per annum, and a like amount for official expenses. At the same time the ministry addressed circular letters to all the

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Colonial governors, enclosing copies of Sir William's new commission, informing them that "it was the act of the king himself through an order in council," and "forbidding any Colonial governor to transact any business with the Indians or hold any communication with them except through Sir William Johnson."

This action settled his status for all time, and he henceforth had a free hand. Shirley, ignominiously snubbed, had to content himself with a personal hatred toward the baronet, which he ever afterward ardently cherished.<sup>1</sup> Shirley was an active, energetic man, of considerable ability in many directions. But he was full of vanity, subject to small jealousies and petty piques. These traits weakened and seriously compromised the efficiency of an otherwise strong character and fertile mind. He could never forgive Sir William

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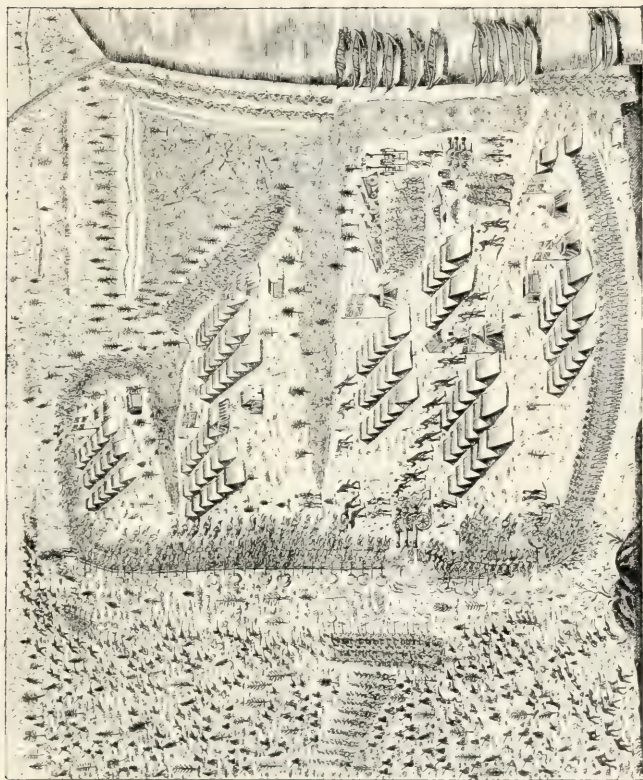
<sup>1</sup> Shirley's subsequent splenetic and impotent hatred was amusing rather than inconvenient to Sir William. In one of his letters to Gen. Jeffrey Amherst in 1759, between whom and the baronet the warmest friendship existed, he says:

"Shirley hates me. I am sorry for him; I almost pity him. He has many good traits that are good and useful, but he has also a few small traits that are bad and harmful—more to himself than to any one else. His trouble lies in his tendency to subordinate the great traits to the small ones. I do not know of another instance where the makings of a great character have been so spoiled by foibles."



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for winning the battle of Lake George against Dieskau, the French commander-in-chief, while he (Shirley) was retreating in disorder from Oswego, pursued by a French colonel!



THE BATTLE OF LAKE GEORGE.



## CHAPTER IV

### SERVICES IN THE LAST PART OF THE WAR 1756-1761

WE may pass rapidly over the events of 1756 and 1757. There never were two drearier years in the history of the British Empire. Corruption and imbecility, incarnate in the ministry of Newcastle, seemed to have reached the uttermost dregs of defeat, disgrace, and disaster. And nowhere were the effects so humiliating or so disheartening as in the American colonies. The worst of these effects took the shape of three generals sent over during that period. They were Lord Loudoun, General Abercrombie, and General Webb.

Loudoun was a titled prig, with no knowledge whatever of the conditions of warfare in America, and very little anywhere else. He was equally ignorant of the spirit of the colonists or the genius and working of their institutions. The only things he ever did, or apparently knew how to do, were to

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display pomp, procrastinate, and find fault. He despised the Provincial soldiers, held the Colonial governments in contempt, and seemed to think that his orders ought to repeal laws. It is difficult to imagine such utter perversity of conception or such flagrant degeneracy of mental process in a man raised under British institutions as were incarnate in this empty, vapid, puffball of English aristocracy. Fortunately he did not last long. But while he did last, he contrived to bring the war to its most desperate stage, to make French success almost universal from Lake Champlain to the Ohio, and to enshroud the hopeless colonies in a gloom that trenched closely upon the borders of despair. England has raised a big brood of worthless "noblemen" (so-called). But she had never before, nor has she ever since, quite duplicated the pattern of Lord Loudoun.

Abercrombie was a bluff but dull soldier, whose sole idea of warfare was the paste-board system then in vogue on the continent of Europe. He was brave, even to rashness, but his courage was that of stupidity rather than of reason. He always wanted to do everything with the bayonet, and was apparently too obtuse to see any difference in the chances of that weapon between the open

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plains of Europe and the tangled woods of America.

His one effort was the assault of Fort Ticonderoga with 14,000 men, about half of whom were British regulars. Montcalm defended the works with 3,600, of whom less than 2,000 were French regulars. Abercrombie lost 2,000 men in half an hour, inflicting on his adversaries a loss of less than 50. Though he had over twelve thousand men left and a heavy train of siege-artillery that had not been used at all, he made no attempt at regular siege, but retreated precipitately to his base of operations. Sir William Johnson was present with Abercrombie's army at the head of 450 to 500 Indians, but they were not permitted to do anything, and shared the disheartenment of their white comrades. Abercrombie, like Loudoun, was of short duration. His strut upon the American stage was very brief. But while he strutted he managed to paralyze the largest and best-appointed army that had ever been assembled on American soil.

And now we come to Webb. The sole exploit of this "general" was to hold his army in firm leash at Fort Edward, while Montcalm at his leisure besieged and took Fort William Henry, only a few miles away, his Indi-



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ans massacring many of the garrison after the surrender. The only help he could vouchsafe to Colonel Munro, commanding the fort, was in the shape of a letter advising him to surrender. But we may let Sir William describe Webb. He said to Colonel Peter Schuyler at Albany, in a talk about the massacre of Fort William Henry shortly after Schuyler's return from Canada on parole:

Webb's malady is constitutional. If he had let me go, I believe I could have compelled the French to raise the siege. If he had supported me with his whole force, I believe we could have beaten Montcalm. We had nearly seven thousand effective troops, and Munro had about sixteen hundred more in his garrison and fortified camp. Montcalm had no more than six thousand effective. But Webb, instead of marching to the relief of Munro, sent him a letter advising him to surrender on the best terms he could get. You know the rest. I hate to say it, but the truth must be told. Webb enjoys a solitary and unique distinction. He is the only British general—in fact, I may say the only British officer of any rank—I ever knew or heard of who was personally a coward.

That Webb was and is such, no one who served with him or under him could fail to perceive. He was nearly beside himself with physical fear after the fall of Fort William Henry. His army was in good spirits, anxious to fight. The general alone

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was panic-stricken! The fate of Braddock, who was an old comrade of his in the Guards, almost upset his mind. At his headquarters in Fort Edward, when I was present, the subject of Braddock's expedition came up, and Webb spoke with almost puerile fear of the horrors of falling into the hands of the Indians. He declared he was sure they would burn him at the stake if they ever caught him, because they knew he was the most dangerous enemy they ever had! (*sic.*)

It was different on the French side. While the English colonies were sweltering in the agony of imbecile command and sweating bloody sweats under the pompous inanity of Loudoun, the brutal stupidity of Abercrombie and the indescribable buffoonery and poltroonery of Webb, the French had their Montcalm! This man was a wonder. We must judge what he did by our knowledge of what he had to do it with. When, in 1756, he took the supreme command of the French forces in Canada, in succession to the Baron Dieskau, defeated, wounded, and captured by Sir William Johnson at Lake George, Montcalm found himself almost wholly dependent on the resources of the colony itself. The impotency of the Newcastle ministry had, indeed, sufficed to paralyze the military arm of England in America on the land. But not even

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the Newcastle blight could wholly wreck or even seriously cripple the sea-power of England.

So it happened that while, under Loudoun and Abercrombie and Webb, disaster trod on the heels of disaster by land, the navy of old England proved irrepressible, and with its Hawkes, its Boscawens, and its Howes, made the ocean path between old France and New France all the time well-nigh impassable, and most of the time wholly so. Indeed, the French sixty-gun ship that Montcalm himself came over in was twice in the midst of Howe's squadron between Cape Race and Bay Chaleur, and escaped only by reason of dense fogs. But, if they did not happen to catch Montcalm, they proved abundantly able to intercept most of his supplies and to capture or chase back to France all, or nearly all, of the transports bringing reinforcements.

The result was that when Montcalm assumed command he instantly saw that he must fight it out with such resources in men and supplies as the colony already held, and that he could place no reasonable dependence upon further reenforcement or succor of any kind from the parent state. Here, in this situation, the sea-power of England doubtless wrote the brightest chapter in its history—

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brighter, even, in the splendor of its contribution to the sum-total of success and victory, than the page on which are inscribed the words "Nelson" and "Trafalgar."

For, in the final act of the drama, which was a play for the sovereignty of a continent, while such generals as Amherst, Wolfe, Forbes, and Sir William Johnson were striking their fatal blows at French dominion on land, the omnipresent and inevitable fleets of Hawke, Boscawen, and Howe were choking French dominion to death on the sea.

As soon as Montcalm had gotten fairly in the stirrups in 1756, he planned and executed an attack on the important English post of Oswego. This was the key of the western Iroquois country, the principal entrepôt of the English fur-trade in that region, and a base from which Lake Ontario might be commanded by a naval force. It had, in 1756, a garrison of 1,500 or 1,600 men, and a small population of civilian traders, with a few women and children. Montcalm crossed the lake from Oswegatchie, and in August, 1756, invested Oswego with about 2,000 French regulars, 2,000 Canadian militia, and 1,000 Indians—the latter commanded by the afterward famous Pontiac. After a brief resistance the small garrison surrendered at

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discretion. The Indians at once desired to indulge in a general massacre, and approached the place where the prisoners were under guard.

Montcalm, determined that the glory of his arms should not be tarnished by cruelty to prisoners, ordered his French regulars to protect the captives at the point of the bayonet. They obeyed to the letter, but it was not until after they had killed six of the Indians and badly wounded eighteen or twenty more that the savages desisted. The able-bodied men of the garrison were taken to Canada as prisoners and the women and children sent to Onondaga Castle under a guard of French regulars. The approach of this escort spread consternation through the Mohawk Valley. The people thought it was the vanguard of an invasion in force. Montcalm, however, destroyed the forts and other buildings, sent belts of peace-wampum to the western Iroquois, and invited them to a conference with the Governor-General at Montreal. He then returned with his whole force to Canada.

The French archives contain evidence that Montcalm's first intention really was to invade New York by way of the Mohawk Valley. But upon a closer reconnaissance, he concluded that the transportation of supplies

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by that route would present insuperable difficulties. After the fall of Oswego he had conferences with certain Seneca, Cayuga, and Onondaga chiefs, from whom he gained the impression that in consequence of the recent demonstrations of strength on the part of the French, and weakness of the English, they would remain neutral in the future.

Montcalm, upon his return to Canada, disposed his forces for an invasion of the northern colonies by way of Lake Champlain early the next spring, and made no other movement of importance during the season of 1756. The Canadian Government, however, actively promoted and instigated Indian forays upon the New York, Pennsylvania, and New England border settlements, whereby the whole winter of 1756-57 was kept hideous with ravage and massacre from the Kennebec to the Susquehanna.

Early in 1757 Montcalm moved up Lake Champlain, and on the 18th of March made a demonstration against Fort William Henry, using the ice on Lake George as a roadway of approach. Finding the place too strong to be taken by *coup de main*, he retired to Crown Point, and awaited the opening of navigation. Meantime he began the building of the formidable works known as Fort Ti-



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conderoga, as an advanced post some miles south of the Point.

As soon as the lakes were clear of ice he transported a force of about 6,000<sup>1</sup> men—3,000 regulars, 2,000 Canadian militia, and 1,000 Indians—in 250 bateaux, to the head of Lake George, and on the 4th of August invested Fort William Henry and the fortified camp under its guns, held by Colonel Munro with something over 1,600 men. General Webb was at Fort Edward, less than a good day's march distant—only 14 miles—with 4,500 men, about half of whom were regulars. Munro asked for assistance, but Webb believed that Montcalm had at least 14,000 men, and cowered behind the parapets of Fort Edward. Two days after the formal investment of Fort William Henry, Sir William Johnson joined Webb from Albany with nearly 2,000 Provincials and 500 to 600 Indians. He asked Webb to give him another thousand men and let him march at once to the relief of Munro. Webb at first assented, but when Johnson's head of column had got about four

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<sup>1</sup> A detachment 1,200 or 1,400 strong under M. de Levi marched down the western shore of the lake. This was a ruse of Montcalm to impress the garrison when they should see de Levi's detachment approaching by land that it was a reenforcement.

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miles from Fort Edward, peremptorily recalled him, saying Montcalm was too strong, and expressing fear that Johnson would share the fate of Braddock.

In vain Sir William assured him that his scouts, both Indians and Stark's Rangers, had informed him that the French force did not exceed 6,000. In vain he entreated and expostulated. Webb was firm. Irresolute in everything else, he could be firm only in his poltroonery and consistent only in his cowardice.

Montcalm contented himself with destroying Fort William Henry. That fort had been made the depot of ordnance intended for the movement contemplated against Crown Point. Montcalm found there a siege-train of twelve heavy guns, several mortars, and a large supply of ammunition and stores. These he took away and retired to Ticonderoga, making no attempt on Fort Edward, though his Indians killed and scalped several of Webb's soldiers within sight of its ramparts. Montcalm has been criticized for his failure to follow up this success. But his force was too small. He had only a little over seven thousand men, including the garrison of Crown Point. Webb had nearly as many.

Montcalm naturally shrank from attack-

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ing a strong fortification like Fort Edward with a force little if any larger than that of its defenders. Had he been better acquainted with Webb this consideration might not have had so much weight in his mind. Owing to the failure of Governor-General de Vaudreuil to send a promised convoy of wagons and pack animals to him, he was deficient in means of land transport. And besides all this, he knew that the militia of New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts would be mobilized at once to support Webb. This, in fact, occurred; more than 12,000 militia assembling within striking distance of Fort Edward, a few weeks after the fall of Fort William Henry. Montcalm did all that his resources permitted.

Only one other "great operation" occurred during the season of 1757. Late in the summer Lord Loudoun sailed from Halifax with eleven thousand troops and a fleet of sixteen sail of the line under Admiral Holborn, to attack Louisburg. But just as the fleet was fairly under way, a vessel sent out to reconnoiter arrived with information that the garrison of Louisburg had just received reenforcements, and that the French fleet there was superior to Admiral Holborn's by one ship of the line. His lordship thereupon

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countermanded the orders for Louisburg and sailed with his troops for New York!

Arriving in New York, his lordship spent the rest of his valuable time while in the colony trying to bully the Governor and Assembly, and oppressing the inhabitants by billeting his troops upon them. There was no earthly pretext for this outrage, because he had plenty of stores and camp equipage, and was amply prepared to make comfortable winter quarters for his army in camp. His conduct can be attributed to nothing but his arrogance, his ignorance, and his malignity. As a bully and a despot, Loudoun was a great success. In every other capacity he was a failure that beggars language to describe.

But while there was a dearth of large operations in 1757, the tomahawk and scalping-knife were busy along the whole frontier, the most conspicuous foray being that against German Flats on the Mohawk, in November of that year. The thriving village was utterly destroyed and its inhabitants, with a few exceptions, butchered or carried into captivity. It was the most atrocious massacre known since Count de Frontenac's ravage of Schenectady in February, 1690.

When the attack on German Flats was made, Sir William, recently returned from the

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northern frontier, was prostrated by the breaking out of his old wound received at Lake George. But he instantly arose, mustered about 300 militia and 250 Indians under Nicklaus Brant, and started to meet the French and Indians, supposing that they would continue their advance down the valley. But they, in their turn, hearing of Sir William's preparation to meet them, hastily retreated to Canada without further effort at destruction, except two or three isolated murders. The forays continued all the winter by small parties, but on the whole not as destructively or through so wide a range as during the previous winter.

The most disastrous effect of all these reverses, so far as Sir William's duties were concerned, was the disaffection they inspired among the western Iroquois. The Senecas and Cayugas openly revolted against English influence. We have noted that Montcalm, when he took Oswego, invited those tribes and the Onondagas to send delegates for a conference with the Governor-General at Montreal. In August, 1757, soon after they learned the fate of Fort William Henry, the Senecas, Cayugas, and Onondagas sent delegates to meet de Vaudreuil. The Oneidas did not send regular delegates, but sev-

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eral members of the tribe, including the half-breed chief Antone, went on their own responsibility — as they afterward explained to Sir William, “not to speak with two tongues, but that our brother Warragh-i-gah-ey might have eyes and ears there to see and hear.”

This was probably true, because the Oneidas, though admitted to the sessions of the conference, were regarded by the western Iroquois delegates with suspicion, and were closely watched. The Mohawks and Tuscaroras alone remained firm in their fealty to the English. Sir William was perplexed by these events, but he did not despair. In October, 1757, he wrote a letter to the Duke of Cumberland, which he requested the duke to show to his royal father. In this letter he said:

. . . But besides all other ill-effects of, our reverses during these two years past, is the very important consideration that they have weakened our alliance with the Six Nations almost to the breaking point. The Indian respects nothing so much as power and success, and nothing so little as apparent weakness and reverses. As they say at the race-course, the Indian is always shrewd in “picking out the winner.” Judged by their protestations to me after the Battle of Lake George,



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one would have thought that no vicissitudes of fortune could cause these Indians to waver. But the victories of Montcalm and the apparent inability of our generals to make the best use of the resources they have, are causing the Indians—that is, the Western Iroquois—to believe that the French are going to win in this contest.

The result is that my influence over them, personal as well as official, is almost gone, and I have no power of my own to restore it. But it could be at once restored by a great victory here for our arms. I do not wish to criticize individuals who are my superiors in rank, but in a general way I must say that the commanders we have in the Colonies now are not adapted to the peculiar responsibilities cast upon them, and while they may be exceedingly competent under the conditions of warfare in Europe, they do not and apparently can not grasp the special military problems presented by our modes of war in the woods. Your Royal Highness is well aware that ours is a kind of warfare that in the main may be termed irregular; and while regular troops, properly commanded and handled, are of great value in its operations, only disaster can result from attempts to apply the teachings of Marlborough and Frederic of Prussia to the problems presented by our war in the wilderness. I am sure there are generals in His Majesty's army who could quickly and effectively adapt themselves to our peculiar conditions, but none of them has as yet been sent here.

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Thus closed the second of the two dreary years 1756 and 1757. The handful of Frenchmen in Canada appeared about to vanquish the multitude of Britons in the American colonies, and the "balance of power" that the Indians held seemed gradually but surely slipping over into the French side of the scale. Henderson, in his *Historical Memoirs of the Duke of Cumberland*, says that much of the great change which soon occurred in the management of affairs in America was indirectly due to him. —

At last, the puny and pusillanimous ministry of the Duke of Newcastle came to an end. He resigned, with great reluctance, in November, 1756, after being decisively beaten on three or four important votes in the House of Commons. William Pitt succeeded him, and at once began comprehensive measures for the restoration of England's failing prestige. Pitt held the premiership only five months—till April, 1757—but during this brief period he sowed the seeds of success broadcast. However, after Pitt resigned the king found himself unable to form a ministry, and when England had been nearly three months without a government, Newcastle and Pitt formed in the early part of July, 1757, a coalition Cabinet, of which the duke was figurehead,

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without a portfolio, and Pitt, in the joint capacity of Secretary for Foreign Affairs and for War, was the actual premier.

Of course, it required some time for this great change to produce results. There were no cables under the ocean then, nor could the sailing ships of those days make definite time-schedules like the steam transports of our era. Therefore, some delay was inevitable before Pitt's genius could express itself across three thousand miles of sea, with only the wings of sailing vessels to carry its inspirations. But toward the end of 1758 the expression of Pitt's genius began to be felt, not only in America, but in India—in other words, all the way from the Ganges to the Ohio. Pitt brought forth a Jeffrey Amherst where Newcastle had a Lord Loudoun; a Wolfe where Newcastle had an Abercrombie, and a Forbes where Newcastle had a Webb!

Before the end of 1758, Amherst had taken Louisburg at one end of the line and Forbes had occupied Fort Duquesne at the other end. The only disaster that year was the bloody repulse of Abercrombie's assault on Ticonderoga, on which sufficient comment has already been made in our brief sketch of that general. Late in 1758 General Sir Jeffrey

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Amherst became commander-in-chief of all the British forces in North America, and from that moment the tenor and spirit of the conduct of the war on the part of the English changed.

General Amherst was peculiarly adapted to the situation—more so, doubtless, than any other officer of his rank then in the British army. He was a man of plain, unaffected manners. In all his transactions he was straightforward, frank, and sincere. He had passed several years of his early military life—1735 to 1743—in Colonial garrisons, was widely acquainted in Colonial society, intelligently comprehended the political institutions of the colonies, respected their rights, and admired the pluck which they had so long displayed under incompetent leadership and consequent disaster. He liked the Provincial officers and men, and they liked and confided in him. Prior to his time the rule had been that no Provincial officer should command regular troops.

One of Amherst's first acts was an order to the effect that when regulars and Provincials were serving together, the ranking officer in actual grade should command, whether regular or Provincial, with the reservation only that when a regular and a Provincial

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officer of the same grade were operating together, the regular should have the precedence, irrespective of date of commission.

General Amherst was methodical—sometimes almost to the point of slowness, but he was sure, and as the sequel proved, his sturdy prudence served the cause better than brilliant audacity might have done. He has been severely criticized for failing to push on to Canada and reenforce Wolfe after his capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point in July, 1759, had opened the road. But Isle aux Noix was still formidable, and besides, the French had four quite respectable brigsof-war on Lake Champlain, while the English had no naval force there whatever. As it turned out, Wolfe did not need his help. Amherst said this himself, and remarked that “Wolfe’s behavior at Louisburg, as his second in command, had satisfied him of that general’s ability to shift for himself.” Moreover, to reach Quebec from the foot of Lake Champlain, a considerable land march had to be made, and Amherst was very deficient in land transport. —

The effects of this turn of fortune were soon apparent among the western Iroquois. In the fall of 1758 Sir William Johnson was invited by a number of chiefs of the Senecas,

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Cayugas, and Onondagas to meet them in grand council at Onondaga Castle, the location of the "Long House," or what might be called the "Federal Capital" of the Six Nations. On this he asked the advice of Amherst, who was then at Albany. The general advised Sir William not to go to Onondaga Castle, but send a counter-invitation to the chiefs to meet him at his own headquarters, Mount Johnson.

"It is clear that they are beginning to see the turn of the tide, my dear Sir William," wrote Amherst, "and while we must forgive their conduct these two years past, we must not let them forget that it is they, and not we, who are on the stool of repentance. They will come to your house. And when they do, they will respect you more and have a deeper sense of your dignity than if you went to theirs."

The baronet took the general's advice, and the conference, attended by over a hundred Indians, among whom were the principal chiefs of the western Iroquois, was held at Mount Johnson, with the happiest results.

During the winter of 1758-59 General Amherst matured his plans for a comprehensive invasion of Canada. The taking of Louisburg and Fort Duquesne at each extrem-



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ity of the long military frontier had clipped the wings of French power.

The French, however, still held the important frontier posts of Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and Fort Niagara. Early in December, 1758, Amherst sent an outline of his plans to Pitt. These plans involved expeditions by land for the reduction of Ticonderoga and Crown Point on Lake Champlain, and of Fort Niagara on the Niagara River. So long as the French held Ticonderoga and Crown Point they could command the approaches to Canada by Lake Champlain, and Fort Niagara was the key to communication by the Great Lakes. Amherst's plans also contemplated a direct attack upon Quebec itself by sea. He gave Pitt his judgment in detail as to the number of troops that would be required for these expeditions, and he also suggested commanders for them.

For the command of the expedition against Quebec he named General James Wolfe, who had been his second in command at the reduction of Louisburg the previous summer. For command of the expedition to Niagara he recommended Sir William Johnson, and he himself undertook to command the operations against Ticonderoga and Crown Point. His recommendation of Wolfe was at

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once adopted by Pitt and confirmed by the king.

At that time the genius of British military education and thought ran largely to gravity and slowness. Wolfe was everything but grave and slow, and for that reason, although his career had been thus far brilliant wherever he had an opportunity, he was looked upon in the sage and solemn councils of the Horse Guards as a dare-devil, if not a hair-brained sort of fellow—capable of great things under command of some one else, but hardly fit to be trusted with grave responsibilities of his own. Indeed, when his appointment to command the Quebec expedition became generally known, several prominent men remonstrated with the king himself, and one of them, whose name has not been given to history, declared that Wolfe was a madman. The supposition is that the author of this remark was the Duke of Newcastle himself, though Lord Hervey in his *Historical Memoirs of George II* does not say so. But, whoever it may have been, the old king, who had become thoroughly disgusted with the conduct of affairs in the American colonies, angrily responded in the decided Dutch brogue he had: “Vell, den, if Volfe is mat, I hope he yill pite some of my udder chenerals!”

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All of Amherst's recommendations were adopted, except that Pitt thought it would be best to place a British regular officer of high rank in command of the Niagara expedition, and make Sir William Johnson second in command. The man selected for the command of the Niagara expedition was General John Prideaux, a soldier who had served for many years in the Grenadier Guards and had achieved a high reputation in the war of the Austrian Succession, and also in the operations on the continent of Europe during the war under consideration. The selection of Prideaux proved happy, like all the rest of Pitt's acts. As soon as he arrived in this country and took command of his expedition, which had already been organized by Sir William Johnson, he frankly told the baronet that he should rely upon his experience and judgment implicitly—that he himself “knew nothing of the conditions of warfare in the woods of America, and he was not going to pretend that he did.” He told Sir William that he should hold him responsible for proper suggestion and advice every day, and that whenever he (Sir William) advised or suggested anything, he might consider it as done.

Under these circumstances, a force assem-

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bled at Oswego under command of Prideaux at the end of June, consisting of 1,200 British regulars, 1,800 Provincials—mostly New Yorkers—and 700 Indians under Sir William Johnson. Before the expedition left Oswego Sir William was joined by 280 more Indians, mostly Senecas and Cayugas. The whole force, therefore, assembled at Oswego was 3,000 white troops and 980 Indians. On the 1st of July General Prideaux, leaving Colonel Haldimand with about 200 regulars and 550 Provincials to hold Oswego, sailed with 2,250 white troops and 980 Indians for Fort Niagara, landed on the 6th of July below the fort, with but trifling resistance, and on the 7th formally invested it. The siege went on without incident of special note until the 19th of July, when General Prideaux was instantly killed by the premature bursting of a shell upon the discharge of a Cohorn mortar, whereupon the command devolved upon Sir William Johnson. Here it is worth while to call attention to the absolute fairness and sense of justice which animated Sir William. In his report of the campaign to General Amherst he said: "Much, in fact most, of the credit of this achievement belongs to the late General Prideaux, because I had carefully studied his plans, which he imparted to me

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with perfect freedom, and I executed them with all the precision and skill of which I am capable, departing from them only when compelled to do so by circumstances which he could not have foreseen."

In the meantime Colonel d'Aubrey, commanding the western district of Canada, gathered from the posts at Detroit, Venango, Fort Lebœuf, and Presque Isle, all their garrisons, abandoning them entirely. By this means he assembled a force of about 1,200 men, of whom perhaps 200 were French regulars and 1,000 Canadian militia. With these and some 500 Indians, he hastened from Presque Isle across Lake Erie, and approached Niagara, with the intention of raising the siege. Sir William, however, was well informed of d'Aubrey's movements by his Indian scouts, and on the 20th of July, knowing that the French commander had reached a point about eight miles from the fort, left a sufficient force in the trenches to prevent the garrison from making a successful sortie, and then marched out with the rest of his army to meet the enemy. The force which he took to meet d'Aubrey consisted of 800 British regulars, about 700 Provincials, and all of the Indians, the total strength being a little over 2,300. He disposed his forces

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with the British regulars in the front and center, closely supported by the Provincials; on the right he placed the whole contingent of Senecas and Cayugas, some 400 strong, under Hi-o-ka-to and Jean Montour; and on the left flank the rest of his Indians, about 500 strong, commanded by the Onondaga chief Onasdego, and the Mohawk chief Nicklaus Brant.

It is worthy of remark that in this battle young Joseph Brant, son of the chief, though only seventeen years old, served as lieutenant in the Canajoharie company of Mohawks.

It happened that Sir William's Indians forming his two flanks came in sight of the enemy's Indians, similarly formed, a few minutes before the white troops got sight of each other. The field of battle was mostly a grove of large trees, without much underbrush, and there was little impediment to the manœuvring of infantry. The two forces of Indians charged each other furiously, making the scene hideous with their yells. At the same time the British regulars, advancing rapidly through the most open part of the timber, suddenly struck the Canadian militia, who were somewhat demoralized by the fact that their Indian allies began to give way on either flank. The regulars, led by Sir William in person, fired one volley, and then charged



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through the open timber with the bayonet. In less than half an hour d'Aubrey's troops, French regulars, Canadians and Indians alike, were totally routed, and fled in the most bewildering confusion, furiously pursued by Sir William's Indians, who, for more than three miles, strewed the ground with their bodies. In this action 146 of the French were killed and 96 soldiers and 17 officers taken prisoners, among whom was the commandant d'Aubrey himself. The number of wounded was not stated in Sir William's report, but it undoubtedly exceeded 300. The force which d'Aubrey had brought to raise the siege was completely dispersed, and was never reorganized.

Sir William then returned to his lines at the fort, and at sundown of the same day sent Major Harvey of his staff to the commander of the fort, informing him of the result of the battle, and advising him to capitulate. Sir William concluded his letter as follows: "I desire not only to avoid further useless effusion of blood, but I must also warn you that if you force me to extremities and compel me to storm your works, I might not have it in my power to restrain my Indians, who would, by an obstinate and fruitless resistance on your part, become too much enraged to be

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withheld." The French commander, Pouchet, yielded to this advice, and at seven o'clock the next morning (July 25th) the garrison, consisting of 618 of all ranks, surrendered at discretion. The fort was occupied by Sir William's troops, and the male prisoners were escorted by a detachment of the Forty-fourth Regiment of British regulars to Oswego; from there they were sent to New York, and from New York to England. The women and children, or at least such of them as desired to do so, were allowed to go to Montreal.

It is worthy of remark that, although in this operation Sir William had under his command nearly a thousand Indians, almost half of whom were Senecas and Cayugas—at that time among the savagest of Indian tribes, so far as methods of warfare were concerned—and who were, besides, extremely wrought up by the loss of several of their braves, including two popular chiefs—yet not the least injury or insult was offered by them to the captured garrison, nor did they take any of the private property of the French troops, or of the families that were in the fort. They took only such plunder as Sir William Johnson allotted to them in the way of legitimate spoils. By this exploit Sir William Johnson—then already decorated by the victory at

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Lake George—became among the most famous men in all the colonies and in England. General Amherst wrote him a most complimentary letter, praising the skill of his combinations and the efficiency of his execution of them. The Duke of Cumberland also wrote a letter to him saying, in allusion to Sir William's total lack of regular military education or training, that "if all of His Majesty's gentlemen subjects were like yourself, there would be no need of military schools."

The principal strategical consequence of the reduction of Fort Niagara was to sever the last link of communication between the eastern and western possessions of France in North America, and its importance to the general plan of operations was but little if any less than the taking of Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point about the same time by the main army under General Amherst.

Sir William was extremely attached to General Prideaux. When that officer first arrived in the colony in the spring, while the expedition was forming, he was Sir William's guest at Mount Johnson for several days. In a letter of condolence to the general's relatives in England, Sir William said, among other things:

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Brief as our association and acquaintance were, I had no friend whose friendship I valued more than that of General Prideaux. He was the soul of honor and courtesy, both in official and personal intercourse. He had no vanities or jealousies or small traits whatsoever. It was his constant custom to spend most of his time in the trenches among the soldiers—a habit indeed to which his untimely death was due. He was as popular among the common soldiers and as much beloved by them as by the officers who had the honor and pleasure of most intimate association with him. By his death the King has lost one of the brightest ornaments of his service.

After the surrender of Fort Niagara, Sir William remained there about two weeks, repairing fortifications and arranging for the comfort of the sick and wounded, both of his own force and of the prisoners, who were unable to be taken away. Then he left Colonel Farquhar in command of the fort, with a garrison of 700 men, and returned by the lake to Oswego, where he arrived on the 7th of August. In a short time Brigadier-General Gage of the regular army came to Oswego, and as he ranked Sir William, assumed the command.

Sir William used to say that no incident of this campaign was more gratifying than

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the opportunity it gave him to lead a considerable force of British regulars in a decisive action—a privilege that no Provincial officer up to that time had enjoyed. This was due to General Amherst's order previously noted. Under the conditions that formerly prevailed, Colonel Haviland of the Forty-fourth regulars would have succeeded General Prideaux, notwithstanding that Sir William Johnson was a major-general on the Colonial establishment.

Various schemes were at once set on foot for the reduction of posts on the north side of Lake Ontario, and at the head of the St. Lawrence, including the forts of la Galette, Oswegatchie, and Frontenac. For some reason, General Gage did not approve these plans. Some time later, when General Amherst was apprised of them, and informed that Sir William had vigorously advocated the movement, he coincided with him, and criticized the inaction of Gage, saying, among other things, that a movement of that kind, whether successful or not, must have absorbed the attention of a considerable part of the forces which, in the absence of such attack from the head of the St. Lawrence, were left free to strengthen the hands of Montcalm at Quebec. However, nothing further was

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accomplished on the lake frontier during the rest of the summer, and in October Sir William disbanded his Indians and returned to his home at Mount Johnson.

It is not within the scope of this work to describe Wolfe's campaign against Quebec, except in the most general terms. In fact, it hardly needs a new description, because few actions in modern warfare have been more widely chronicled, more thoroughly analyzed, or more permanently committed to fame than that. Hardly ever was there so dramatic a battle; hardly ever have such momentous consequences hung upon the issue of one. Everything about it was dramatic. The stealthy scaling of the steep declivities up to the plateau of Abraham by Wolfe and his soldiers, under cover of night and fog; the surprise and almost dismay of Montcalm when the rising sun disclosed that his adversary had outwitted him; then the desperate effort of the French to retrieve their fortunes; the steady, indomitable tenacity with which the English held their advantage; the final rout of the French; the mortal wounding of both commanders, and the last words of each; Wolfe saying, when his aide-de-camp told him that the French were fleeing: "I am now content to die"; Montcalm, when told by his sur-



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geon that he had but a few hours to live, and hearing the tramp of his beaten and retreating troops through the streets of Quebec: "I am glad of it, for I shall not live to witness the surrender of Quebec." All these episodes have made the battle of Quebec not merely a theme for history, but an inspiration of poetry as well.

The forces that Wolfe deployed on the plateau of Abraham were about 5,600 strong—all regulars; one regiment, however, the "Royal American Regiment of Foot," of which the first battalion formed part of Wolfe's army, though in all respects borne on the Regular Establishment, was wholly recruited and mostly officered from the colonies—the only natives of Great Britain serving in it being the lieutenant-colonel in command, a major, two captains, and the surgeon. So far as is known, every enlisted man in it was of colonial birth or citizenship.

Montcalm's force consisted of about 3,500 French regulars and 2,000 to 2,500 Canadian militia. The loss of the British army has been estimated variously at from 800 to 1,000 men killed and wounded. The French loss was never reported. Montcalm's army was, however, practically dispersed. The surviving regulars made their way to Montreal, and

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the militia, for the most part, disbanded and went to their homes.

With the fall of Quebec on the one hand, and Fort Niagara on the other, together with the expulsion of the French garrisons from Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the power and dominion of France in Canada was now narrowed down to the remnants of different forces which assembled at Montreal under command of the Governor-General, the Marquis de Vaudreuil. The season, however, was too far advanced for any further operations in the latitude and climate of Canada. General Amherst therefore put all his regular forces in winter quarters, and furloughed his Provincials, that they might spend the winter at their homes. In the meantime he laid his plans for an attack upon Montreal as soon as spring should open in 1760, with the entire disposable British force in the northern colonies.

Nothing of particular note occurred during the winter. In his plan of campaign, General Amherst projected a simultaneous attack on Montreal from three points. General Murray was to come up the St. Lawrence from Quebec. Colonel Haviland, in command of the force which garrisoned Ticonderoga and Crown Point during the winter, was to

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move down Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River—reducing Isle aux Noix on his way—and then march across the country to Montreal; while General Amherst was to assemble the main army at Oswego and move across Lake Ontario to the head of the St. Lawrence, reducing the forts at la Galette and Oswegatchie, and thence to descend the St. Lawrence to Montreal. The troops under command of General Stanwix, forming the Department of the Ohio, were recalled, and the garrisons of the smaller forts in the colony of New York were all brought together and made part of General Amherst's grand army at Oswego. He was detained somewhat longer than he had contemplated, mainly by the slowness with which the Provincial troops reassembled. "The colonial troops," he wrote Sir William Johnson, "come in slow. . . . I hope you will do everything in your power to hasten their arrival."

Sir William explained in reply that the delay was greatly due to the drought which prevailed that spring, by which the waters of the Mohawk and Oneida rivers became so low that navigation upon them, which was necessary for the transportation of stores, was greatly retarded and almost suspended. However, all arrangements for the campaign

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were completed by the 12th of June, and General Amherst proceeded to Oswego, where an army of 6,000 Provincials and 4,000 British regulars was assembled. On July 25th Sir William Johnson joined him with 650 warriors, and the day before the expedition sailed it was further increased by 700 Senecas and Cayugas, with whom was a considerable number—perhaps 200—of Oswegatchie and Caughnawaga Iroquois, who had previously been under the influence of the French. This made the whole number of Indians under the command of Sir William Johnson, 1,350—the largest force of that race ever assembled on this continent up to that time.<sup>1</sup> General Am-

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<sup>1</sup> In this campaign Sir William had his Indians organized in what might be called a “brigade” of two “regiments.” One “regiment” was composed of the eastern Iroquois—Onondagas, Mohawks, Oneidas, Tuscaroras, and “River Indians”; the other of the Senecas and Cayugas, or western Iroquois. The “eastern regiment” was something over 600 strong and commanded by the elder Brant (Nicklaus). The “western regiment” was 700 strong and commanded by the redoubtable Hi-o-ka-to, with Captain Montour and Young Cornplanter in command of its two wings. Sir William said that Hi-o-ka-to’s command of western Iroquois was the finest body of men in the physical sense that he ever saw assembled. “What a pity it is,” he wrote to General Amherst, “that these magnificent Indians could not have seen the right war-path for their interests earlier in the struggle!”

An interesting episode of this campaign was that John Johnson, then eighteen years old, accompanied his father’s

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herst sent Colonel Haldimand with a command of a thousand men to clear the head of the St. Lawrence of any obstructions that might impede safe navigation, and on the 10th of August embarked from Oswego with his whole army. La Galette and Oswegatchie were reduced without serious resistance, although la Galette, which was defended by Fort Levi, a regular fortification, held out until the 25th of August, when the commandant, Pouchet, surrendered at discretion. He was the same officer whom Sir William Johnson had captured the year before at Fort Niagara, and who had been exchanged. When Fort Levi surrendered the Indians found in the deserted huts of the enemy a few

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division as a lieutenant of Provincials, while Joseph Brant, also eighteen years old, served under his father Nicklaus as captain of the Mohawk Indian company of Canajoharie Castle.

General Amherst's main army as it sailed from Oswego was in three divisions, each about 4,000 strong. The first, composed mainly of regulars, was commanded by General Gage; the second, composed of a battalion of regulars and the New England Provincials, was commanded by Colonel Haldimand; and the third, composed of all the New York Provincials and all the Indians, was under the command of Sir William Johnson. Captain John Stark's Rangers, in two companies, were attached to Sir William's headquarters and reported directly to the commander of the division. Though the Indians had been organized in companies in the Niagara campaign the year previous, this was the first time they had ever been "brigaded" or subjected to regular discipline.



KING HENDRICK AND SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON.

Bronze statue at the State Park, Lake George.





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Mohawk scalps, and raising the war-whoop or scalp-yell, desired at once to commence a general massacre.

Sir William immediately suppressed this outbreak in a most peremptory fashion, threatening that if the Indians persisted in their purpose, he would instantly ask General Amherst to back him up with a strong force of British regulars and Provincials, and the fierce intentions of his warriors were thoroughly quelled before they had done any damage. This was the first and last time he ever had occasion to resort to drastic discipline in handling his Indians.

On the 31st of August General Amherst again embarked his army, and proceeded carefully down the St. Lawrence River reconnoitering at every step of his progress, and affording the enemy no opportunity for a surprise. The boats passed the rapids of the St. Lawrence above Montreal, though not without some casualties. Several boats were crushed against the rocks and 46 men were drowned. On the 6th of September Amherst's army arrived within sight of the church spires of Montreal, and so well had his plans been concerted and matured, that, singular as it may seem, General Murray, on the same day, approached it in the other

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direction from Quebec. The next day Colonel Haviland also joined the main army with his division from Ticonderoga and Crown Point. General Amherst now completely surrounded the city and sent a message to the Marquis de Vaudreuil, informing him of the exact strength of his army, which, after the junction of the three forces, his own, Murray's, and Haviland's, was over 18,000 strong, exclusive of Sir William Johnson's Indians. He assured the French Governor-General that his most ardent desire was to prevent useless shedding of blood, that he knew exactly the force under the Governor-General's command and the elements of which it was composed, and stated them in his letter with an exactness that startled the marquis.

So far as his own force was concerned, as a proof of his good faith, he invited the marquis, if he so desired, to come to his camp and review it himself. Coming from some men, this sort of thing might have been classed as bravado, but in the case of Sir Jeffrey Amherst it was nothing more than the promptings of his absolute integrity and his perfect sense of honor. General Amherst sent his first communication to the Governor-General late in the afternoon of September 6th. Early in the morning of the 7th de Vaudreuil replied,

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assenting in the main to the propositions the General had advanced, but requesting two days for deliberation and consultation with his subordinate officers. This General Amherst cheerfully granted, but the Governor-General did not consume the whole of the time given him. At noon, the 8th of September, he sent a letter to the British commander incorporating the terms of a capitulation that he was willing to sign. This capitulation provided that the French troops then under arms in Montreal should be permitted to march out with the honors of war, retaining their colors and personal effects; that their arms should be stacked in their quarters and not laid down; that they should not be held as prisoners of war, but should be paroled until such time as they could be transported to France; that within a reasonable time all other French prisoners of war held by the British should be released and allowed to return to France; that all British prisoners of war held by the French should be immediately given up; that all captives held by the Indians hitherto in alliance with either party should, as far as practicable, be returned to their homes on both sides; that private property of every kind should be respected, and that the British commander should take

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the responsibility of maintaining order in the city and its environs.

To these terms General Amherst added the stipulation that Canada, with all her dependencies, should be surrendered to the Crown of Great Britain, and all claims of France to dominion over any part of Canada or her dependencies should cease. Upon the exchange of these terms, an interview was immediately arranged between General Amherst and the Marquis de Vaudreuil. In this interview General Amherst was supported by General Murray, Sir William Johnson, General Gage, and Colonel Haviland. The Governor-General by only a single aide-de-camp. There was little discussion in this interview. Sir Jeffrey Amherst and the Governor-General passed the usual formalities of politeness, and then General Amherst handed to the marquis his response to the letter embodying the proposed terms of capitulation. He agreed to all of them, but said that it would be necessary to get up some method of distinguishing public from private property, concerning which the Governor-General had made no suggestion. To this the marquis agreed, and a commission was appointed, consisting of Sir William Johnson and General Gage on the British side, and Colonel Levi and another

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officer on the French side. Little difficulty, however, was experienced in arriving at the desired distinction. Arrangements also had to be made for provisioning the troops forming the French garrison. When all these preliminaries were settled, de Vaudreuil sadly led his dejected and dilapidated forces out of Montreal, and the town was occupied by a British garrison under General Gage. General Murray was sent back the day after the completion of the capitulation to Quebec with 4,000 men as a garrison.

When the town was about to be occupied by the British forces, General Amherst wrote a note to Sir William Johnson requesting him to take the greatest pains to restrain his Indians from any excesses that they might be disposed to commit. Sir William's characteristic response, much appreciated by Amherst, and which he was afterward fond of relating as a good joke, was as follows:

CAMP BEFORE MONTREAL, *September 9th, 1760.*

MY DEAR GENERAL: Replying to your note of this date, I take pleasure in saying that I shall not only cheerfully hold myself personally responsible for the behavior of every one of my Indians, but if you desire it, I will detail a suitable detachment of my Senecas to act as provost guard in the town!



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When we consider that the Senecas were notoriously the worst Indians Sir William had, the humor of this proposition will be apparent. History does not record that General Amherst accepted the generous proposition.

On the 12th of September General Amherst left Montreal for New York, and the next day Sir William embarked with his 1,300 Indians in bateaux, in which they returned by easy stages to Oswego, where they were disbanded.

During this campaign, the same as during the Fort Niagara expedition, the Indians in service received the same pay and allowances as the Provincial troops. When disbanded at Oswego they were paid off, loaded with presents, each Indian receiving, among other things, a new blanket taken from the French public stores captured at Montreal. This event practically terminated the old French War, and brought the entire continent of North America east of the Mississippi River and, generally speaking, north of the vast territory subsequently included in what is known as the Louisiana Purchase, under British rule.

The French still occupied Detroit, Mackinaw, St. Mary's (Sault Ste. Marie), and one

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or two other small forts in the country of the upper lakes.

Major Rogers, commander of the Independent Battalion of Scouts, which bears his name, together with his second in command, Captain John Stark, were sent with a suitable escort to notify the garrisons of these posts of the situation. They took with them certified copies of the capitulation signed by the Governor-General, also the orders of the British commander for the temporary regulation of affairs at those posts until a permanent government should be established. This duty was accomplished without difficulty worthy of note.<sup>1</sup>

General Amherst went to New York, where he was received with all possible public demonstrations of joy, and all the honors due to his achievement were bestowed upon him. He was afterward raised to the peerage in England under title of his own name as Baron Amherst.

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<sup>1</sup> When near Detroit Rogers and Stark were met by Pontiac, who demanded to know why they entered his country with an armed force. He had already been apprised by Indian runners of the capitulation at Montreal, but said that de Vaudreuil had no right to surrender him! After some parley, however, Pontiac was appeased and Rogers and Stark went on to Detroit, which was at once surrendered by its commandant, d'Aubrey.

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Sir William Johnson, after disbanding and paying off his Indians at Oswego, returned to his home at Mount Johnson, his military career now being at an end.

General Amherst, however, did not consider the work complete, and as soon as the demonstrations in his honor at New York were over, he immediately planned a campaign to begin at once against the French settlements in Louisiana. To this end, knowing that the climate in that region would be unfavorable for the operations of British or Northern Provincials before the month of January, he proposed to sail from New York about the 1st of December with a fleet of 20 sail of the line and a force of about 6,000 British regulars. At the same time he proposed that an expedition, composed of Provincial troops from New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, should rendezvous at Fort Pitt, at the head of the Ohio, and before the close of navigation proceed down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. This force, he thought, ought to be at least 4,000 strong, and he proposed that it should be placed under the command of Sir William Johnson.

This project, however, was not carried out. Although General Amherst was commander-in-chief of all the forces, and practically in

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that capacity viceroy of all the North American colonies, yet his advisers in New York counseled him that it would not be wise to undertake such an expedition without the express consent of the ministry, in view of the fact that during the whole war the British had made no attempt whatever upon the Louisiana colony, and that colony had, so far as any one knew, done nothing to oppose the British arms. General Amherst argued that it would take at least three months before the project could be laid before the ministry, considered by them, and an answer returned. By that time, he said, it would be too near spring for British and northern Colonial troops to operate safely in that latitude and climate. Thereupon, for some reason that never has been explained in history, the whole project was dropped. France was allowed to retain her sovereignty over Louisiana until a day or two before the signing of the definitive treaty, when she ceded all of her possessions known as the colony of Louisiana to the Spanish Crown.

While the subjugation of Canada and the expulsion of French rule gave rest to the officers and troops who had been so arduously and so long engaged accomplishing the result, it only served to vastly enlarge the sphere of

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Sir William Johnson's duties and augment his responsibilities as general superintendent of all the North American Indians. Heretofore he had practically only the Iroquois to deal with; now he was called upon to pacify and bring into compliance with the terms of the new situation the great number of Indians in the numerous tribes who inhabited the great west and northwest, and who had previously been wholly under French influence. He foresaw at once that in this task he must encounter at the outset a very great and embarrassing difficulty. He foresaw that English traders would undoubtedly make great efforts to get control of the Indian trade in those regions, and that, in consequence, troubles were likely to arise between them and the French traders, who had so long controlled that commerce, and doubtless difficulties with the Indians themselves would ensue.

The ink was hardly dry on the articles of capitulation of Montreal when Sir William went to New York to consult with General Amherst on this subject. By this time he and the general had become the closest of friends, each confiding absolutely in the other's judgment, and each taking counsel of the other in every great emergency. Sir William explained to the general that in his judgment

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the best policy for the British to pursue was to let the French residents of Canada as much alone as possible, and not to interfere with their trade or their personal relations with the Indians. He said he was satisfied that they would all become loyal and faithful subjects of the king, and that their good-will should be sedulously cultivated, and the assistance of their influence with the Indians freely invoked. He also held that it would be unwise to make any attempt at changing the religious influences that had so long been exerted over the Canadian Indians. He argued that any effort to interfere with the influence of the Catholic priests would create distrust among the Indians, whether converted or not. On the whole, he told General Amherst that he believed the best policy for the British to pursue would be—now that they possessed the governing power in Canada—to leave all other conditions as nearly *in statu quo* as possible. To every one of these propositions General Amherst gave hearty assent; and as, in view of the practical veto upon his proposed invasion of Louisiana, he intended soon to sail for England, he promised Sir William that he would exhaust his influence with the ministry and the king to have Sir William's ideas carried into effect.



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It is hardly necessary to add that the policy pursued by the British Government toward the French and Indians in Canada, from that day to this, has been based practically upon the system advocated by Sir William Johnson in January, 1761.

Filled as he always was with a profound sense of the responsibilities of his position, and realizing that not only the interests of his government, but that the comfort and well-being of the Indians depended almost wholly upon the management of their affairs, Sir William lost no time in making himself acquainted with the nature and volume of the new duties which the change of rule in Canada had brought upon him. Early in the spring of 1761, in fact, immediately after his return from New York and his interview with General Amherst, previously mentioned, Sir William sent a considerable number of his most trustworthy Indian runners, mostly Mohawks and Oneidas, with some Senecas, to travel all through the country of the Canadian Indians, and those farther west, with messages and belts of peace-wampum, inviting them to send their chiefs and delegates to meet him at a grand council, which he proposed to hold at Detroit some time in August of that year. He set out from Fort Johnson for Detroit on the

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5th of July, 1761, accompanied by his son, John Johnson—afterward Sir John—then a youth of nineteen, and his nephew, Lieutenant Guy Johnson. During this journey Sir William kept a journal, in it almost daily recording every incident worthy of historical note that occurred. Among the pleasant duties he had to perform at the outset of this journey was to assemble at the principal castle of each tribe all the Indians who had accompanied General Amherst's expedition to Montreal, for the purpose of distributing to them medals which he and the general had persuaded the Assembly of New York to have struck off for them. Having performed this pleasant duty, which consumed several days, and having attended at the Seneca capital a grand ceremonial in memory of the Indians of that tribe who were killed in the battle of Niagara in 1759, he went on to Niagara, and from there to Detroit. The necessary limits of this volume do not admit of any extended extracts from his extremely interesting journal. By way, however, of exhibiting the fact that in the midst of the most important public duties Sir William never forgot his home or domestic responsibilities, we quote one entry dated Wednesday, October 21, 1761. The following is the exact text:

## Sir William Johnson

Wednesday, 21st.—A fine morning, a warm day. Embarked at eight o'clock. At the Three River Rift met Sir Robert Davis and Captain Etherington, who gave me a packet of letters from General Amherst, and a copy of a treaty made at Easton in August by Mr. Hamilton, of Philadelphia, with some scattering Indians who remained about that part of the country—all of little or no consequence. Encamped in the evening about three miles above the Three Rivers. Captain Etherington told me Molly was delivered of a girl—that all were well at my house, where they stayed two days.

In this mission to Detroit Sir William was exceedingly successful; in fact, as he states in the journal from which we have just quoted, he was surprised at the alacrity with which the western and northwestern Indians accepted the new state of affairs. Arriving at Detroit, he held a council, or rather a series of councils, lasting eighteen days. He did not have, nor was it his purpose to have, all the Indians together at one time. He preferred to deal with them tribe by tribe, if possible, or at any rate in numbers not sufficient to form an unwieldy assemblage. While at Detroit he was visited by, and had conferences with, representatives of all the tribes of any importance east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio. He had no trouble with any of

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them, and they all seemed willing to meet the British at least half-way. Some of them, notably the Ottawas and Hurons, who were well aware of the British propensity to gain possession of the lands of the Indians, and whose location in Canada—that is to say, in that rich country embraced in the triangle formed by Lakes Erie and Ontario on the south, the Ottawa River on the northeast, and Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair, the Detroit and St. Clair rivers on the west—appeared anxious on that subject, and pressed Sir William for assurances that their new Great Father, the British king, who had so recently become their guardian, would cause his people to maintain the same land policy toward them that had been for nearly two hundred years maintained by their former Great Father, the king of France. Undoubtedly these were embarrassing propositions for Sir William, because he knew what the British land-hunger meant for the Indians as well as the Indians themselves did. He admits in his journal that he was nonplussed at having this, which had always been the most crucial question in the Indian policy of the British, thrust at him by the Ottawas and the Hurons on the occasion of his first visit to them, but he does not enlighten us as to how he an-

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swered their proposition, or, perhaps, how he evaded it.

While at Detroit, Sir William employed as interpreters in dealing with the Hurons, Ottawas, Chippewas, and other Canadian tribes, the Jesuit Fathers St. Martin and Pottier. Father St. Martin was the leading Jesuit of his time. He was the author of the History of New France, referred to in a previous chapter, though it had not been printed at that time. However, Sir William knew all about his rank as an ecclesiastic and his influence over the Indians—particularly the Ottawas, Hurons, and Chippewas. Therefore, the baronet was quite attentive to Father St. Martin. The priest was at that time over sixty years of age, and had passed forty years of his life among the Indians. In 1761 he lived at the Old Huron Mission, a few miles from Detroit on the shore of Lake St. Clair. On the 17th of September Sir William visited him at the mission, recording the event in his journal:

Thursday, 17th.— . . . Arrived at the Huron castle soon after 4 o'clock, where the Indians were drawn up and saluted me. Encamped here. Visited the Mission Priest, Pierre Pottier. Supped with Saint Martin, the famous Jesuit, M. La Bute, and others. Then went to the council room of the

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Hurons, where they had everything in good order and three fires burning. . . .

It would appear that Sir William exhausted his powers of diplomacy upon the good old French priest. Father St. Martin had made up his mind to return to France and pass the rest of his life there. Sir William besought him to stay in Canada, where all his life-work had been done, and to use his vast influence with the Indians in the interests of peace under the new *régime*. The priest expressed fear of interference by the English conquerors with the Catholic institutions, so long established among the Indians. Sir William persuaded him not only that there would be no such interference, but that it would be the policy of the English to sustain the priests in their efforts to Christianize and civilize the Indians. Finally, Father St. Martin agreed to remain in Canada, and he was afterward extremely useful under the British rule. A year or two later he went to France to arrange for the printing of his book, but returned to Canada and remained there until his death, some twenty years later. He was the last of the school of Father Marquette, La Salle, Joliet, and Hennepin.

After this visit to the Huron mission, Sir



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William set out on his return journey the 20th of September, and arrived at Mount Johnson the 30th of October, having made several stops on the way to visit various forts and Indian villages. Among other things during this trip, the baronet regulated the number of troops to be maintained in the several garrisons required in western Canada, the total being about 1,200 regular troops. He also provided for a force of Indian or half-breed runners and scouts, to be employed in the pay of the king at the several forts and trading-posts.

## CHAPTER V

### PONTIAC'S WAR AND SIR WILLIAM'S ESTATE 1761-1770

AFTER the treaty—or treaties—of Detroit in 1761 the Indians, both in the older English colonies and the newly acquired domain of Canada, remained quiescent for two years. In view of the vastly increased scope of his duties, both as to the number of Indians and as to the extent of territory to be dealt with, Sir William found it necessary to operate in all ordinary or routine affairs through deputies. He already had one deputy superintendent, who had held the position for several years, with headquarters, after 1758, at Fort Pitt, and having charge of the Indians in the Ohio Valley. He now appointed two more deputy superintendents. One was his son-in-law, Colonel Daniel Claus, husband of his daughter Nancy; and the other his nephew, Colonel Guy Johnson, who was soon to be married to his daughter Mary—both by his white wife. Croghan remained in charge of

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the Ohio Indians, with headquarters as before, at Fort Pitt. Colonel Claus was placed in charge of the Canadian Indians west of the Ottawa River, with headquarters at Detroit. Colonel Guy Johnson took charge of the Iroquois and the Canadian Indians east of the Ottawa, with headquarters at Oswego. This arrangement relieved the baronet of all minor details of Indian administration, leaving him free to devote his time to questions of general policy and to the adjustment of differences among the Indians themselves. It was not easy to make such hereditary enemies as the Iroquois and Algonquins comprehend the idea of living in peace under control of the same superintendent. Affairs, however, progressed without much jarring until 1763.

We have remarked that Sir William acquired in 1751 or 1752 a large tract of land, patented to himself "and others" in 1753 as the "Kingsboro Patent," and located a little distance north from the Mohawk River, in the region round about the present city of Johnstown, N. Y. Among the "others" mentioned as parties in this tract was Arent Stevens, a widely celebrated Indian trader and interpreter. Sir William gradually bought out his associates, one by one, until the entire tract came into his possession. It

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embraced about 26,000 acres.<sup>1</sup> From time to time he made substantial improvements on this tract, clearing considerable areas, building sawmills and a grist-mill, and settling upon it a considerable colony of tenants, mostly Scotch-Irish and Highland emigrants.

About 1760 or 1761 it had become more valuable and important than his smaller estate at Mount Johnson, and he decided to remove to it. During the years 1761-62 he built a manor-house on this estate, to which he gave the name of "Johnson Hall." It is still standing, near the present city of Johnstown—which he, at the same time, founded.

In the early spring of 1763 the new manor-house was completed, and Sir William moved into it, leaving Mount Johnson and the estate connected with it in possession of his eldest son and heir—afterward Sir John Johnson—then just arrived at the age of twenty-one. Johnson Hall was—and is—a large, commodious mansion, and at that time the most imposing edifice west of the Hudson River. It consisted of a main building of wood, weather-

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<sup>1</sup> The total area was much more than 26,000 acres. But many settlers were already within its boundaries, having built houses and cleared farms. They had no valid titles, but Sir William gave them deeds for nominal consideration and did not disturb any of them.

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boarded in a fashion to resemble blocks of hewn stone—much like Washington's residence at Mount Vernon. It had two wing-buildings in the same style of architecture, though smaller and built of stone.

Sir William had by this time accumulated a large family. It consisted of his two daughters by Katharine Weisenburg—Nancy and Mary—then about twenty-two and twenty years old, respectively, the former recently wedded to Colonel Daniel Claus, and the latter soon to be married to his nephew, Colonel Guy Johnson. Besides these—his children born in wedlock—there were Charlotte and Caroline Johnson, his half-breed daughters by Caroline Hendrick, these about fourteen and eleven years of age, respectively, and the five little half-breeds that Molly Brant had borne to him in the nine years of their life together. The sixth of Molly Brant's children, a girl named Mary, was born at Johnson Hall, not long after its occupation by the family. Sir William's half-breed son by Caroline Hendrick, young William Johnson, did not make his home at the mansion, but lived at Canajoharie, part of the time with his grandfather, the sachem Abraham, and part of the time with his uncle, "Little Abe." However, at this particular time, young Will-

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iam Johnson was attending Dr. Wheelock's Academy at Lebanon, Conn., along with his cousin, Joseph Brant, who graduated in the spring of that year.<sup>1</sup>

It was at his new residence of Johnson Hall that Sir William received the first intimations of Pontiac's conspiracy in the summer of 1763. He was not apprised of it until just before the storm burst. This was the first time in his twenty years' experience in dealing with the Indians that the baronet had been taken off his guard. The secrecy with which Pontiac's plot had been hatched, considering its vast extent and thorough organization, was marvelous. For more than a year its arrangements had been in progress, car-

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Brant used to relate with much relish an anecdote of his high-spirited young half-breed cousin, who was seven or eight years his junior. Young Ralph Wheelock, the reverend doctor's son, had a saddle pony, and one day, thinking to make young William Johnson "fag" for him, ordered the half-breed boy to go and saddle up the pony and bring it around to the door. "I won't do it," said young Johnson. "A gentleman's son, as I am, does not perform menial service for the sons of common people!"

"What is a gentleman?" inquired young Wheelock rather superciliously.

"A gentleman," quickly responded the young half-breed, "is a man who lives in a big mansion, has a great lot of land, keeps race horses, and drinks Madeira wine at his dinner—and your father doesn't do a single one of those things!"

Young Wheelock saddled the pony himself.



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ried out among many tribes, and covering a vast territory; yet, with all Sir William's elaborate system of information through his scouts, traders, and runners, the first outbreak took him completely by surprise. This outbreak was the attack on Detroit, the best fortified post west of Niagara.

It was garrisoned by two companies of British regulars, having 128 men and 8 officers, of Gage's light infantry. The first effort of Pontiac was to take it by stratagem, which was frustrated by the vigilance of Major Gladwyn, the commandant. The major had a pretty Chippewa half-breed girl as housekeeper and companion, and she, overhearing the conversations of the Indians in their own tongue, discovered their intentions and informed her protector just in the nick of time. Gladwyn at once took precautions, refused to admit the Indians inside the stockade, and on the 7th of May, when they tried to force their way in, killed two of their chiefs with his own pistols right in front of the main gate.

Pontiac, observing that his plot was detected, then settled down to a close siege, which was maintained, with many vicissitudes, until November 15, when the Indians, worn out, dejected, and discouraged, not only

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abandoned the siege, but sued for peace. Pontiac, deserted by his warriors, sullenly returned almost alone to his village, declaring his intention to try it again.

Almost simultaneously with the attack on Detroit a large force of Ohio Indians—Shawnees, Wyandots, Miamis, Delawares, and Mingoes—invested Fort Pitt. The garrison at this post was four companies of the Royal Americans, and the real commandant was Major George Croghan, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs. As soon as tidings of the attack reached the settlements of Pennsylvania, east of the mountains, General Amherst sent Colonel Bouquet, with 500 regulars, mostly Highlanders, to raise the siege. During his march Bouquet was joined by 280 or 300 Pennsylvania and Virginia frontiersmen. Among these was a company of about fifty, from the upper Potomac and Shenandoah valleys, who came up the Cumberland Valley and joined the expedition at Carlisle—or where that town is now. There was nothing particularly remarkable about these fifty Virginia backwoodsmen, except that their captain was a man of the name of Daniel Morgan!

They were nearly all hunters and trappers; men from whom the Indians themselves

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could learn lessons in woodcraft and the art of bush-fighting.

The 5th of August, 1763, when Bouquet's force was within a few miles of the fort, the savages laid an ambushade for him at a place called Bushy Run, on a plan much similar to the ambush into which Braddock had marched eight years before. But Bouquet was not Braddock. Apprised of this ambushade by some of his Pennsylvania backwoodsmen, whom he kept in advance as scouts, he was not taken by surprise. The scout who first discovered and reported the presence of the Indians in force was Lewis Wetzel, then a youth hardly twenty years old, but who subsequently became one of the most bloodthirsty and successful "Indian-killers" known to American history. A most desperate battle ensued, resulting in the total rout of the savages, who lost over 300 out of about 700. The loss of Bouquet's force was 8 officers and 115 enlisted men killed or wounded, nearly one-third of the latter mortally. Bouquet then marched without further opposition to the fort, the besieging Indians fleeing down the river in their canoes.

Several attempts against Fort Niagara were made by a force mainly composed of renegade Senecas, with some Ottawas and

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Ohio Indians. They surprised and massacred two or three small parties in the neighborhood of the fort, but did not attempt to besiege it. While these events were in progress the Indians attacked, with more success, the smaller and slenderly garrisoned posts of Lebcœuf, Venango, Presque Isle, St. Joseph, Maumee, Mackinaw, Sandusky, and St. Mary's, butchering their unfortunate garrisons almost to a man.

However, before the end of 1763 the main force of Pontiac's rebellion was crushed, and though spasmodic outbreaks occurred for a year afterward, it never again assumed formidable proportions. General Amherst was disposed to deal in a conciliatory spirit with the Canadian Indians. But he was bitterly incensed at the conduct of the Senecas, and informed Sir William, in the winter of 1763-64, that it was his intention in the early spring to take a force of regulars and Provincials—which he proposed to command in person—and, as he expressed it, “wipe forever from the face of the earth that faithless, cruel tribe, who have already too long debauched the good name of the Iroquois Confederacy by pretending to belong to it!”

In a memoir of Lord Amherst, published

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anonymously in London in 1798, about a year after his death, appears the following:

. . . General Amherst objected to any further negotiation with the Senecas. They were, he said, destitute of honor, faithless, treacherous, and a race of natural-born criminals and murderers. They cumbered the ground. He could make no use of them but exterminate them as a warning example to all other Indians. He at once formulated a general order for concentration of all the British forces in North America against the Seneca nation. He called for 10,000 militia to be furnished by Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia in appropriate quotas. Of the 11,000 British regulars then in the colonial garrisons he ordered 6,500 to take the field. He also directed that the services of friendly Indians, if proffered, should be declined, as this was to be purely a white man's war! He proposed to move against the Senecas in four columns. General Bouquet with the Pennsylvania and Virginia militia and the 700 regulars in the Ohio District—together about 3,500 strong—was to move from Fort Pitt up the Allegheny River and French Creek to attack from the southwest. General Haldimand was to assemble at Fort Niagara a force of 3,000 regulars drawn from the Canadian garrisons and assail the Western Senecas. Sir William Johnson, with the New York and Connecticut militia and 500 regulars—together about 3,500 strong—was to

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move down the Susquehanna and up the Chemung against the southeastern towns. While General Amherst in person, with the Massachusetts and New Hampshire militia and 2,500 regulars, forming a force of about 6,000, was to invade the Seneca country from the east by way of the Mohawk Valley and Onondaga. "No male Seneca capable of bearing arms will be spared," he said. "The women and children will be taken prisoners and afterward distributed among the other tribes. The Seneca nation as an organized tribe must disappear! Every habitation in the Seneca country will be razed to the ground. Their crops will be destroyed and their live stock killed or driven off. It is my intention to destroy the tribe and completely desolate their country. After that is done their lands will escheat to the Crown and will at once be opened to white settlement."

That General Amherst was able to accomplish his purpose is beyond question. The force he proposed to mobilize was about 16,000. The total population of the Seneca nation was not more than 10,000 or 11,000, and they could not, even by levy *en masse*, muster over 1,500 fighting men. In fact, any two of his proposed four columns of invasion could have crushed the tribe. That the Senecas merited condign punishment for their perfidy and cruelty is quite clear. But that they deserved the dire fate General Amherst threatened to visit upon them is not so apparent.

There is, however, circumstantial evidence that



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the commander-in-chief did not intend to be as savage as his word. No militia was actually embodied except the Mohawk regiment under Colonel Claus and three independent companies of Schoharie and the Susquehanna. The only movement of regulars was a transfer of the second battalion, Sixtieth Royal American Foot, about 800 strong, from the garrison of Quebec to Oswego. Moreover, the tenor of General Amherst's orders was, by some mysterious agency, made known in the Seneca villages almost as soon as at the colonial capitals. . . . If, as seems plausible, it was a threat on a grand scale, the effect was all that could have been desired, because the Senecas abjectly sued for mercy and peace and never again made any trouble.

Sir William vigorously opposed this policy. He declared that what the Senecas had done was not their act as a tribe, but the independent, unauthorized, and much-regretted action of their bad or misguided young men. The Senecas, on their part, hearing of General Amherst's project, sued in the most abject manner for peace, and promised to deliver up the prime instigators of the defection among them. Upon this, Amherst relented. They gave up to him nineteen of the "instigators," and after hanging two of the worst of them at Onondaga Castle, by way of an "object-lesson," the general aban-

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doned his declared intention of "exterminating the tribe"!

"In all my long and happy acquaintance with him," says Sir William in his journal, "this was the first time I ever saw General Amherst display real anger. But on this occasion he was thoroughly roused, and all his usual placidity of temper seemed to have vanished. In truth, it was with difficulty at first I could induce him to listen to my expostulations."

The hanging of the two sub-chiefs of the Senecas by General Amherst at Onondaga Castle was the first exhibition the Indians had seen of the Anglo-Saxon mode of punishing murderers. In order to make the spectacle more impressive, the general ordered the bodies of the culprits to be sunk in Onondaga Lake with stones tied about their necks, as food for the fishes. And he forbade any mourning or other funereal rites for them in the tribe, threatening to hang any one who should attempt to offer any rites to their memory. The fact is that, but for Sir William's intercession, Amherst would have hanged the whole nineteen renegades who were delivered up to him. As it was, he took the other seventeen to New York and kept them in jail there until every vestige of Pon-

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tiaç's conspiracy had disappeared. They were not released until Pontiaç himself formally surrendered in 1766. During their two years of imprisonment eight out of the seventeen died. The fates of these renegades cowed the Senecas for all time.

It was, perhaps, fortunate for the restoration of tranquillity between the white people and the Senecas, that General Amherst was appointed Governor of Virginia at the end of 1763, and left the New York frontier in the spring of 1764 to take up his new duties shortly after the events just noted. His departure left Sir William Johnson in complete control of the situation, and he soon succeeded in bringing the Senecas to a status of perfect obedience and amity. However, the unwonted spectacle of publicly hanging two of their chiefs on the same gallows was a lesson that sank deep into their memories. To them it was an infinitely severer punishment than even burning at the stake. "That way of killing a warrior with a rope," they said, "chokes him so he can not sing his death-song. He can sing his death-song at the stake, but not when he is being choked to death by a rope!"

As we have remarked, Pontiaç himself did not surrender until 1766, nearly three years after the outbreak of his plot, and two years

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after its complete suppression. Finally, after much negotiation and correspondence, Pontiac agreed to meet Sir William at Oswego to smoke the great calumet of peace and pledge his fealty to the King of England. On the 23d of July, 1766, the great chief and Sir William met face to face at Oswego. Stone gives a striking description of their meeting:

As it was now the warmest of summer weather, the council was held in the open air, protected from the rays of the sun by an awning of evergreens. . . . At one end of the leafy canopy the manly form of the Superintendent, wrapped in his scarlet blanket bordered with gold lace, and surrounded by the glittering uniforms of British officers, was seen with hand extended in welcome to the great Ottawa, who, standing erect in conscious power, his rich plumes waving over the circle of his warriors, accepted the proffered hand with an air in which defiance and respect were singularly blended. Around, stretched at length upon the grass, lay the proud chiefs of the Six Nations, gazing with curious eyes upon the man who had come hundreds of miles to smoke the calumet with their beloved Superintendent.

From Oswego Sir William went to Niagara, where he held a grand council with delegates from all the western and Ohio tribes that had been implicated in Pontiac's con-

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spiracy. He was detained at Niagara for some time by delay in arrival of delegates from the tribes farthest west, and he says that he "took advantage of this waiting-spell to indulge in his favorite sport of gunning for wild fowl which, at this time of the year, swarm upon the waters of the river, bay, and lake."

Finally, in September, Sir William returned to his home at Johnson Hall.

The events just related practically ended his direct personal attention to Indian affairs. The treaties he made at Oswego and Niagara included every Indian tribe hitherto under French dominion or influence, together with the Ohio tribes—Shawnees, Wyandots, Miamis, Mingoes, Delawares, and the remnant of the Piquas or Piankeshaws. Most of the southern Indians were also represented at the Niagara council; Cherokees from western North Carolina and northern Georgia; Chickasaws from what is now middle and northern Alabama; Yemassees from the uplands of South Carolina; Catawbas from northwestern North Carolina and the southern part of what is now West Virginia. No delegates were present from the Creeks of southern and middle Alabama and Georgia, or from the Choc-taws and the Natches of what is now Mississippi. Some of these latter tribes, notably

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the Creeks and Choctaws, were still under the Spanish and French influence, yet dominant in Florida and Louisiana. But, on the whole, the era beginning with the surrender of Pontiac was one of peace between the two races that lasted until the outbreak of the Revolution.

The deputy-superintendent system worked well. To the three deputies already in office—Croghan, Claus and Guy Johnson—Sir William now added a fourth in the person of Colonel Thomas Polk, of Mecklenburg, N. C., who assumed charge of the southern tribes, with headquarters where the city of Augusta, Ga., now stands.

From this time on the baronet retained under personal supervision only his faithful Mohawks, Oneidas, Oghwagas, and Tuscaroras. But these had almost ceased to be Indians. Most of them could speak English, and many of them could read and write. The Mohawks, now thoroughly intermingled with the white population of the valley that bears their name, had farms which they cultivated as thriftily as their white neighbors. In somewhat less degree the same was true of the Oneidas. The Oghwagas and Tuscaroras in the Susquehanna Valley, from the Unadilla to Chenango Point, and in the Great Bend, had



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many fertile clearings, orchards, and comfortable log-cabins. In these tribes the system of landholding was similar to that of the white people. Each Indian farmer owned and cultivated his separate farm. The western Iroquois—Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas—had a good deal of land cleared and under cultivation, with numerous orchards, and for the most part lived in cabins made of logs, or wattles plastered with clay and roofed with bark. But these tribes still adhered to the ancient usage and cultivated their lands in common. All were tranquil and apparently contented. Sir William had little to do in the official way but keep in touch with his deputies and watch the fruition of the work to which he had so long given his energies, and which he had conducted with such marvelous skill, patience, and courage. He now had under his control, or within the scope of his official authority, nearly two hundred thousand Indians.

The state of civilized comfort which the Iroquois had reached in the eighteenth century, though often described, is hardly realized by modern readers. In 1765, after the suppression of Pontiac, the British Government determined to make a road practicable for artillery and all kinds of wagon or sleigh

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traffic from the upper Mohawk to Fort Niagara. Sir William Johnson, being directed to make this road, organized a surveying party to lay out its route. The party consisted of Simon Metcalf, Philip Burlingame, Ezra Buell, James Ogden, and Sir William's half-breed son, William Johnson, who, having "graduated" at Dr. Wheelock's Lebanon Academy, had decided to learn the art of surveying. In his Narrative, Ezra Buell describes several of the towns through which they passed. We select his description of the "Old Castle Town," at the foot of Seneca Lake, near the present site of Geneva, N. Y.;

Here, he says, is a clearing about two miles long and more than a mile wide, bounded on the southeast by the lake shore. In the midst of it, about 60 rods from the lake, is the Old Castle, a strong log building, with a parapet around the roof well loopholed for musketry and the whole surrounded by a substantial log stockade. There is a spring inside the stockade and the whole structure will shelter a garrison of at least 300 to 350 men. From the Old Castle in both directions, east and west, is a broad street, I would say a hundred and fifty feet wide. On both sides of this thoroughfare are built, at distances of one or two hundred feet from each other, one-story log houses, having fireplaces with chimneys made mostly of wattles filled in with clay, though some are of stonework. In

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many of the fireplaces I noticed swinging cranes to hang kettles on, the same as in white people's houses. They have plenty of cooking utensils—kettles, spiders, skillets, Dutch ovens, and roasting-spits. In some houses the floors are of hard-beaten clay; in others of puncheons (split logs), neatly fitted and smoothed off, and deer and elk skins, tanned with the hair on, are made to serve as carpets. The houses are built one room wide and in lengths according to the needs of the family. Some of them are four rooms in length, the rooms being generally from 12 to 14 feet square. The fireplace is usually in the middle room.

The cleared land is tilled in common, each family getting its share of the whole product. The crops are corn, pumpkins, melons, apples, pears, peaches, beans, and lately they raise some potatoes and turnips. They have a good many horses and a few cattle. But cattle need too much care and feeding in winter to suit the Indians. Besides, they have plenty of wild meat, and as they do not wish for milk, they have little need of cattle. In the village are 72 inhabited houses besides six log huts, roofed over, used as storehouses for corn and other provisions for winter. The total number of inhabitants is 427, of whom about 50 are half-breeds.

An important article of food with them is fish, with which the lake and Seneca River actually swarm—trout of several varieties, whitefish, pike, pickerel, and many other species. The Indians

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catch them mostly by spearing in the night, with a light at the bow of their canoes, which attracts the fish to the surface. They use a three-pronged spear and are very expert with it. These fish they salt down or smoke—such as they do not eat fresh. They get salt from the springs at Onondaga, where they go two or three times a year to make it by boiling the water in kettles or leaving it to evaporate under the hot sun in shallow troughs. Much of the timber about here is hard maple, from which they make quantities of molasses and some sugar of an inferior kind. They make cider by mashing apples in a large mortar and then letting the pulp or pumice ferment in large troughs hollowed out of logs. When the pulp gets soft they squeeze out the juice. It seems to agree with them, but our party suffered diarrhea from drinking it. . . . Altogether, the Senecas at Old Castle live as well as most of the white settlers in a new country. But I could see that they have no ambition for improvement beyond a certain point, as white settlers have. As soon as certain creature wants are satisfied they are done. Here, at Old Castle Town, they appear to have reached the end of their ambition and are content. The great war-chief, Cornplanter, lives here. He is the half-breed son of an old Indian trader by name of Abiel and a Seneca woman. Cornplanter's wife is a white woman, young and neat. He does not allow her to work, but keeps two or three squaws to be servants for her. He is a fine, stalwart fellow, very sensible, keeps open house for his friends,

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and is true to the King as steel. Here also resides the famous Council Chief, Kay-ag-sho-ta. He is reputed the best orator and wisest counselor in the Seneca nation. He always represents them in councils and conferences with the Government people. He made some mistakes at the beginning of Pontiac's war, but his glib tongue has got him safely out of them!

Three families of white people live here. They are the agent for the Eastern Senecas, Captain McMaster, his wife and two children; the licensed trader, Mr. Forman, his wife and three children; and the gunsmith, a Switzer, by name Drepard. The gunsmith is the most important personage here. The Indians often bring their broken guns a hundred miles to have him repair them. They have plenty of firearms. Every Indian able to carry a gun has one and some have two or three, taken from the enemy in the last war. A few of them have creased rifles, which they obtain in trading expeditions down the Susquehanna, whither they often go as far as Lancaster in Pennsylvania. This gunsmith was put here by Sir William Johnson through agreement with the Indians in 1759. His wife is a handsome young half-breed woman and they have one small child. . . .

Most of the Indians here dress after the fashion of white people. The men wear blue or green hunting-shirts, braided and fringed, and cloth or deer-skin leggings and moccasins. They are fond of the uniform coats of British or Provincial sol-

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diers. They do not wear the blanket as a garment, as wild Indians do, except in very cold weather.

The women wear gaudy-colored jackets, profusely braided and beaded, and flannel petticoats reaching a little below the knee, with leggings of fawn-skin and moccasins. . . .

The Post is half a mile east of the village on the lake shore. It has four good-sized log houses of two stories—the agent's house, the trader's house, the trader's store, which also contains the gunsmith's shop, and the gunsmith's house—all surrounded by a strong palisade of logs set deep in the ground. It is a busy place, many Indians from distant towns being always here to trade, or to see the agent, or get their guns mended.

It is worthy of note that the trader's two clerks are both young Indians educated at Canajoharie, one a half-breed, the other a full-blood.

About the time under consideration Sir William made a report to the Colonial Office in London, giving an enumeration of all the Indian tribes within his sphere of control or influence. This was in detail of the several tribes, and stated only the number of able-bodied men in each. But he explained that the grand total of all ages and sexes could be ascertained by considering the number of able-bodied men or warriors as one to every ten.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Not all of the able-bodied men in any Indian tribe were rated as warriors. A considerable number were always pro-



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The Six Nations and eastern Canadian Indians he estimated at 3,960 warriors, indicating a population of about 40,000. The Ottawa Confederacy at 3,800 warriors, or 38,000 total. The various branches of the Chippewa Nation at 4,000 warriors, or 40,000 in all. The southern Indians—Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, etc., at 6,000 warriors, or 60,000 all told. All other remnants of tribes, about 1,000 able-bodied men, or 10,000 total population. No Indians living west of the Mississippi were included. In a note appended to this estimate Sir William said:

West of the Mississippi and north of the Missouri rivers are many large tribes subject to His Majesty's government by the territorial terms of the Treaty of Paris properly construed. But I must say it is quite evident to me that the framers of that treaty were in sore need of a scholar in geography. As for the numbers of these far-western tribes, I can get no accurate information. They have been visited only by the Jesuit Brothers and the French and half-breed *voyageurs* and *coureurs des bois*, none of whom pays much attention to statistical matters. All I can get from them is that many tribes inhabit that country, and some of them

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fessional hunters, and these never took the war-path in distant expeditions; in fact, were not expected to fight unless in defense of their villages. On an average the professional hunters were about one-fifth of the able-bodied males.

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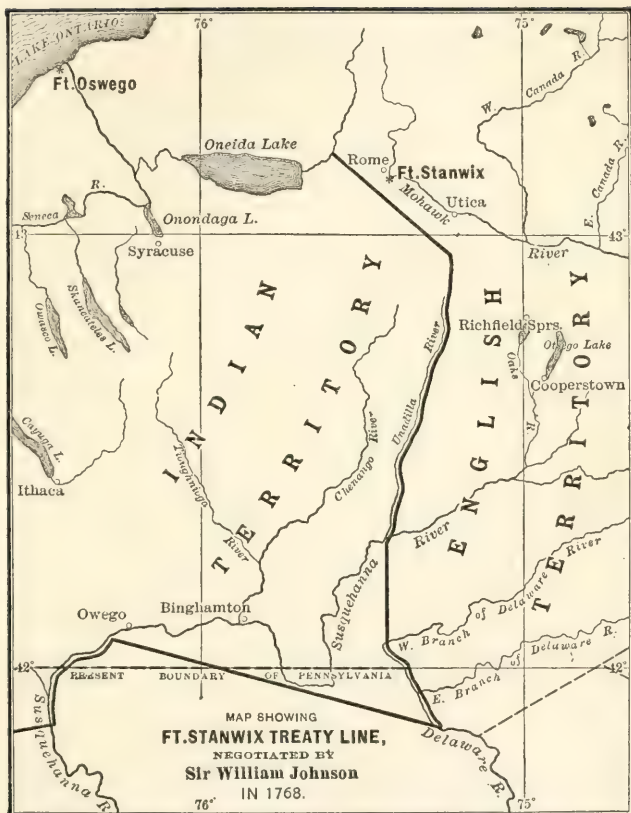
are very numerous. The Jesuit Father, St. Martin, and his attendant, Jacques la Bute, whom I met at Detroit in 1761 and who interpreted for me there with the Hurons, Ojibways, and other north-western nations, had been as far to the northward and westward as the Mandan country a few years before. They believed there were more Indians west of the Mississippi than east of it; but said they were exceedingly primitive, had no fire-arms, and were not settled in more or less permanent villages like the Indians who live in the forest country to the eastward, but roamed in a nomadic fashion over all the great treeless plains in that region. They declared their belief that these far-western Indians must be 250,000 in number.

These estimates are probably the source of Professor Donaldson's calculation, that in the third quarter of the eighteenth century there were half a million Indians in North America, north of the Rio Grande and Gila rivers.

After 1766, Sir William's life was, in the main, reposeful. His four deputies transacted the business of their respective districts with signal ability and success. In 1768 Colonel Polk accomplished the hitherto impossible task of making a treaty with the Creeks; a transaction with which Sir William had nothing to do, except approve the action of his subordinate and secure the royal signature.

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The last great public work of the baronet's lifetime was completed also during the year 1768. That was the ratification of a definite boundary between the territory of the Six Nations and the colony of New York, with an actual survey and delimitation—known to history as the "Fort Stanwix Treaty Line." This line began at Wood Creek, near Fort Stanwix, ran thence southeast to the Forks of the Unadilla River; then followed that river to its confluence with the Susquehanna; then ran due south to the present site of Deposit, N. Y.; thence southeast to the Pennsylvania line—which was the Delaware River; thence west-northwest to the Susquehanna at Owego; thence down the latter river to the mouth of Towanda Creek; and from that point it was projected in an air line on the point of compass required to strike the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela at Fort Pitt or Pittsburg. This is the line traced on the map compiled with great care and accuracy by the author of *The Old New York Frontier*, Francis Whiting Halsey. It corresponds with the field-notes of Ezra Buell, who was assistant to the chief surveyor, Simon Metcalf. But Ezra says in his narrative that "the easterly jog in the line was never observed by the whites or insisted on by the Indians." As to purchase





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of lands, and actual settlement, he says the Susquehanna River formed the real boundary, from the mouth of the Unadilla<sup>1</sup> to the mouth of Towanda Creek. "The purpose of the easterly jog in the line," Buell says, "was to include the Oghwaga and Tuscarora villages on the Susquehanna, between Cuna-hunta (now Oneonta) and Chugunut (now Choconut), within the Indian domain. But many whites were already there, a good part of them married to or living with Indian women, and the Oghwagas and Tuscaroras freely sold their lands to these whites. By 1774 there were almost as many whites and half-breeds in this valley as full-blood Indians."

With the Fort Stanwix treaty and the running of the boundary-line consequent upon it, the active public career of Sir William Johnson in the broad sense practically ended. The rest of his life was devoted to study, correspondence, the education of his children, and the general management of his personal

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<sup>1</sup> Ezra Buell spells what we now call "Unadilla" "Tian-anderha," which was really the nearest equivalent in English letter sounds to the pronunciation of the name of the river in the Oneida dialect of the Iroquois tongue. Other forms of the word in early papers are Teyonadelhough, Cheunadilla, and Tunadilla, the latter being the spelling Joseph Brant employed.



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estate. Occasionally he settled disputed questions between his deputies and the Indians within their jurisdiction; but such disputes seldom occurred.

At the period now under consideration (1769) he received under charter from the king a tract of land known as the "Royal Grant." This land had previously been conveyed to him (in 1760) by the Council of Mohawk Sachems for the consideration of £3,000 in money and about as much more in merchandise. But the grant was not approved by the king until 1769. It embraced all the land on the north bank of the Mohawk River between the mouths of Cayadutta (now East Canada) and Canada (now West Canada) creeks. Its total area was something over 100,000 acres, but between 1760 and 1769 a good many settlers had cleared and improved farms within its borders. Sir William at once gave quit-claims to all these, at the rate of threepence to a shilling per acre, according to the value of their holdings by reason of location.

When all these deductions were made, the "Kingsland Grant"<sup>1</sup> embraced about 90,000

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<sup>1</sup> Most historians of this epoch adopt the legend that Sir William obtained this grant by what might be described as a "game of competitive dreaming" between him and old Hendrick. The legend was that Hendrick, visiting him one day

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acres. The next year (1770) Sir William acquired by purchase from the original patentees under Governor Clinton, whose patents had been confirmed by the king in 1761, a tract embracing the valley of the Susquehanna from the mouth of Charlotte River to that of the Unadilla. This tract was twenty-three miles long by four miles wide—two miles back from the river on each side—and embraced about 92 square miles or, say, 58,000 acres. It was his intention to settle on this tract a numerous colony of Scotch-Irish emigrants from the counties Down, Armagh, and Antrim. But he did not live to accomplish his purpose. The acquisition of this tract made him the largest landholder in America and perhaps in the world; his total possessions

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when he had on the uniform of a British major-general, informed him that he (Hendrick) had dreamed the night before that he himself was clad in a uniform exactly like it. Sir William, the legend says, gave Hendrick a major-general's uniform. Then, visiting Hendrick a day or two afterward, he told the chief he had dreamed that the Mohawks gave him a tract of 100,000 acres of land. The legend further recites that Hendrick gave him the land, but said, "Don't let's dream any more!" This is not a bad story; but the fact is that the tract was not offered to Sir William by the Mohawk Council until 1760. Hendrick was killed at Lake George in 1755. The alleged "competitive dreaming" on his side therefore must have been done by his ghost! The real fact is that the legend was a pure invention from beginning to end.

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amounted to about 200,000 acres, after buying up all the smaller patents embraced within the limits of the Royal Grant.

Of this vast area all except the Susquehanna tract was more or less improved, and the Mount Johnson and Johnstown tracts were, for those days at least, thickly settled. By 1770 the village of Johnstown, which he founded about 1760—or when he began building Johnson Hall—had grown to be a smart little town of over a hundred dwellings and about 500 people, with several stores, blacksmith's, gunsmith's, and carpenter's shops, a good-sized flour-mill, two sawmills and a wagon-shop. It also had a flourishing manor-school, and an Episcopal chapel, both built wholly by the baronet. Two years later (1772), when Tryon County was formed from the western part of Albany County, Johnstown was made the shire town, or county-seat.

In 1770 Mary Brant bore to Sir William her last child. It was the ninth in seventeen years—1754–1770 inclusive. Eight of these lived, and one died quite young. The baronet was now fifty-five, and Mary Brant thirty-six years of age. Mary, though in her girlhood as trim-built and supple as a young deer, grew stout and matronly in her later years, but lost none of her charms of manner or vivacity of

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spirit. General Schuyler was a guest at Johnson Hall frequently between 1768 and 1774, and in his papers he says:

Mary Brant was a most accomplished mistress of such an establishment, and her numerous flock of little half-breed Johnsons forms as interesting a family as one can see anywhere. They attend the Manor school at Johnstown, and I am told they are among the smartest of the pupils. Sir William is exceedingly proud of them, and loses no opportunity of exhibiting their graces and acquirements to his guests. He intends to send his two half-breed boys to the new King's College in New York [now Columbia University], and the girls he will educate as they grow up in Mrs. Pardee's school for young ladies at Albany.

Among the last public enterprises of Sir William, and one in the success of which he found much satisfaction, was the introduction of the manufacture of rifles in New York. Prior to 1768 Lancaster, Pa., had practically monopolized the making of rifles in this country. The few that found their way into the hands of the New York settlers or Indians cost exorbitant prices. Sir William's experience had taught him that the rifle, either for hunting or for war, was much superior to the light smoothbore gun he himself had designed for the Indian and frontier trade twenty-five

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years before. He therefore determined to domesticate rifle-making in the Mohawk Valley. But none of the gunsmiths there understood the art of rifling, and they were unwilling to undertake it. Not to be balked, Sir William induced several skilled rifle-makers to leave Lancaster and set up shops in New York. Among them were the Palm brothers, Jacob and Frederick, who established their shop at Old Esopus, Ulster County, and made excellent rifles there for many years; Henry Hawkins, who selected Schenectady for his place of business, and John Folleck, whose shop was at Johnstown. Hawkins was not only a great rifle-maker himself, but his sons and grandsons succeeded him in later years, establishing shops at Rochester, Louisville, Detroit, and St. Louis, until, during the last quarter of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, the "Hawkins rifle" was as famous all through the West as the Winchester is now.

Originally Sir William induced these pioneers of rifle-making to locate in New York by advancing money for the building of their shops and purchase of tools and then agreeing to take at a fixed price all their product that did not promptly find market elsewhere. This began in 1769. The market soon became

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brisk and other rifle-makers came in. By 1775 most of the settlers on the New York frontier and many of the Indians had discarded their old smoothbores for the new rifles, and though the industry was only about six years old, New York was second only to Pennsylvania in the manufacture of what we commonly term "the national American weapon." The author of this work has a Palm rifle, made in 1773, in perfect preservation, flint lock, and as effective now as it was when it left the shop. It is 40 inches long in the barrel—which is octagonal—55 inches over all, full-stocked with curly-birch root, carries 45 spherical balls to the pound of lead, and weighs 10½ pounds. It saw service in Morgan's Riflemen and was in the battle of Oriskany.

Sir William's success in starting the manufacture of rifles in New York was as complete as in his other undertakings, and was due to the same causes: the energy which he always brought to bear on any project and the unstinted freedom with which he was willing to spend his money to accomplish his object; and in this respect it was immaterial to him whether the object was the public welfare or personal profit.



## CHAPTER VI

### SIR WILLIAM'S CHARACTER AND DEATH

1769-1774

AFTER concluding the Fort Stanwix treaty and supervising the running of the boundary line, which was completed in 1769, Sir William passed most of his spare time in reading, and in writing papers on public topics. He had accumulated one of the best private libraries in the colonies; having begun to import books from England as early as 1740, or as soon as he had means of his own to afford it. At the end of his life he had over two thousand volumes, which in those days was an extraordinary private collection.

To indicate generally the character of his selections, I give two orders, selected at random from a number. These orders were sent to London in 1749. They embraced Sir Isaac Newton's complete works; Desagulier's Course of Experimental Philosophy, in two volumes, illustrated; Chambers's Dictionary, two volumes; Battles of Alexander the Great,

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by LeBrun; Rhoderick Random; the Whole Proceedings in the House of Peers Against the Three Condemned Lords; Historical Review of Transactions in Europe from the Commencement of the War with Spain; the Gentleman's Magazine; the Family Magazine; A Large Globe; All Recent Pamphlets on Political or Scientific Subjects; Review of the Services of His Majesty's Navy Since the Accession of William III; Life of the Duke of Marlborough, 3 volumes, by Ledyard; Military History of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough, 2 volumes, by Campbell; Life of William III, translated from the Dutch of Montanus; Life and Reign of King William III, by Harris; History of France Under the Reign of Louis XIV, translated from the French of de Larrey; Life of Louis XIII, by Howell; Life of Queen Anne, by Oldmixon; An Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough, by Hooke; Life of Peter the Great, 3 volumes, by Mottley; Life of the Prophet Mohammed (in Latin), by Gagnier; Translation of the Koran (in Latin), with Notes, Anon.; and lastly, Pictures of Some of the Best Running Horses at New Market.

Besides such special orders, from time to time, he had a standing order with the prin-

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principal bookseller in London to send to him "all new books on History, Philosophy, and the Lives of Men Worth Reading About," as they came from the press.

His own literary ability can be judged only by his voluminous correspondence. As a sample, I offer some extracts from a long and comprehensive letter written by him to Arthur Lee, at the request of the Royal Philosophical Society, under date of February 28, 1771:

SIR:

JOHNSON HALL, *Feb. 28, 1771.*

. . . I am apprehensive that any account in my power respecting inquiries amongst the unlettered Indians will prove inadequate to the expectation formed in your letter; for, notwithstanding my long residence in this country, the nature of my office and the most diligent inquiries into these various particulars, I find all researches of that sort, for which I shall give reasons presently, involved in such difficulty and uncertainty as to afford but slender satisfaction—at least far short of my inclination to gratify your desires thereon. However, I shall endeavor to make some atonement by giving you some account of these difficulties, together with such other hints as, from the motives of enquiry suggested in your letter, may, I flatter myself, be of some use or amusement to you.

It will be unnecessary to enlarge on the want of laws, government, letters, or such other particu-

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lars as are to be found in most authors who have treated of the American Indians. . . .

I must therefore observe that the customs and manners of the Indians are in several cases liable to changes which have not been thoroughly considered by authors, and therefore the description of them at our particular period must be insufficient; and I must further premise that I mean to confine my observations to those of the Northern Nations, with whom I have the most acquaintance and intercourse.

In all inquiries of this sort we should distinguish between the most remote tribes and those Indians who, from their having been next to our settlements several years, and relying wholly on oral tradition for the support of their ancient usages, have lost a great part of them and have blended some customs amongst ourselves, so as to render it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to trace those customs to their origin or to discover their application. Again those Indians who are a degree farther removed have still a good deal of intercourse with our traders, and having altered their system of politics, though they still retain many ancient customs, they are much at loss to account for them; whilst those who are far removed from any intercourse with the whites (a few traders excepted) are still in possession of the greater part of their primitive usages. Yet these cannot give a satisfactory account of their original signification; and having so blended the whole with fable

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as to render it a matter of great difficulty to separate truth from it. Add to this that above a century ago they had French Jesuits among them who, partly for religious purposes, but chiefly to secure particular ends in the wars they often fomented, introduced some of their own inventions which the present generation [of Indians] confound with their ancient ceremonies. . . .

With respect to your questions concerning the chief magistrate or sachem and how he acquires his authority, I am to acquaint you that there is in every nation a sachem or chief, who appears to have authority over the rest and it is greatest amongst the most distant nations. But in most of those bordering upon our settlements, the chief's authority is hardly discernible, he seldom assuming any power before his people. Indeed, this humility is judged the best policy; for, wanting coercive power, their commands would perhaps occasion assassination, which sometimes happens.

The sachems of each tribe are usually chosen in a public assembly of the chiefs and warriors, when a vacancy happens by death or otherwise. They are generally chosen for their sense and bravery from among the oldest warriors and approved of by all the tribe, on which they are saluted sachems. There are, however, several exceptions; for some families have a kind of hereditary in the office, and are called to this station sometimes in infancy.

The chief sachem is so either by inheritance or by a kind of tacit consent, the consequence of his

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superior abilities and influence. The duration of his authority depends on his own wisdom, the number and consequence of his relations and the strength of his particular tribe (if in a Confederacy). But in those cases where the office descends (by inheritance) should the successor appear unequal to the task, some other sachem is sure to possess himself of the powers and duties of the station. I should have observed that military services are the chief recommendation to this rank. And it appears pretty clearly that heretofore the chief of a nation had in some small degree the authority of a sovereign. This is now the fact among the most remote Indians. But, since the introduction of firearms they no longer fight in close bodies, but every man is his own general; and I am inclined to think that this is calculated to lessen the power of a chief. . . .

The chief sachems form the Grand Council and those of each tribe often deliberate apart on the affairs of their particular tribe. All their deliberations are conducted with extraordinary regularity and decorum. They never interrupt him who is speaking or use harsh language, whatever may be their thoughts.

The chiefs assume most authority in the field, but this must be done even there with extreme caution. . . .

They are severe upon those guilty of theft, (a crime indeed uncommon among them); and in cases of murder the relatives are left to take what-



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soever revenge they please. In general they are unwilling to inflict capital punishments.

On their hunts, as on all other occasions, they are strict observers of *meum* and *tuum* and on this pure principle, holding theft in contempt, they are rarely guilty of it though tempted by articles of much value or ardently coveted. Neither do the strong oppress the weak or attempt to seize their prey of the chase or anything else of their property. And I must do them the justice to say that unless heated by liquor or inflamed by revenge, their ideas of right and wrong and their practices in consequence of them would, if more known, do them much honor. . . .

As to your remark on their apparent repugnance to civilization, I must observe that this is not owing to any viciousness of their nature or want of capacity, as they have a strong genius for arts and uncommon patience. I believe they are put in English schools too late in life and sent back too soon to their people, whose political maxim, Spartan-like, is to discountenance all pursuits but war, holding all other knowledge as unworthy the dignity of man and tending to enervate and divert them from that warfare on which they conceive their liberty and happiness depend. Such sentiments constantly instilled into the minds of youth and illustrated by examples drawn from the contemptible state of domesticated tribes, leave lasting impressions that can hardly be eradicated by an ordinary school education. . . .

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With regard to language, there is so remarkable a difference between the tongue of the Iroquois and all the rest, as to afford some ground for inquiry as to their distinct origin. The Indians north of the St. Lawrence and north and west of the Great Lakes and those who live in the Valley of the Ohio, notwithstanding the differences between them in other respects, speak a language radically the same, and can, in general, communicate their wants to each other, while the Iroquois who live in the midst of them are incapable of conveying a single idea to their neighbors; neither can they pronounce a word of their language correctly. There is some difference in dialect among the nations of the Iroquois themselves, but there is little more than may be found in the different provinces of large states in Europe. . . .

I am Sir, your very Humble Servant

WM. JOHNSON.

We have reproduced the foregoing rather as a sample of Sir William's literary style than for the sake of the information it contains. All the facts stated in it are well known now; but they were not so familiar to the reading public in 1771. Only about one-third of the whole letter appears above. It was, in fact, a paper, and was printed as such in the Proceedings of the Philosophical Society. Most modern critics would call the style somewhat involved and, perhaps, ponderous;

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but after all Sir William managed to make his points clear.

Sir William Johnson, though not college-bred, as intimated in the first chapter, was well educated. He was particularly well versed in Latin, and his library was well stocked with the classics of that tongue, and also with more modern works written in it. He often received letters in Latin from French priests in Canada, after the conquest, because they could not write English and he could not read French. It was his habit to make notes of his own and attach them to all important letters when he put them on file; and examination of his manuscripts showed that his notes on the letters in Latin were always in that language. He was an exceptionally good mathematician, and could make and plot a land survey as well and as accurately as any professional surveyor.

Though he never had the slightest military training in his youth, and though his first actual experience in warfare was the command of a considerable force, he "took to the trade" intuitively, and became, by great odds, the ablest and most successful of all the Provincial generals, excepting, perhaps, Sir William Pepperell. In battle he exhibited the most daring bravery, but in the general han-

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dling of his troops, manœuvring, etc., he was cool and cautious, even to the extent—as some of his contemporaries thought—of over-prudence.

On this point, however, he used to say himself that, as he had large responsibilities of command thrust upon him without adequate military experience or training, he was often in doubt; and when so situated, always determined that any error he might commit should be on the safe side! “I was always,” he once said, “on the lookout for an ambush, and was resolved that, whatever else my fate might be, it should not be that of Braddock!” When commanding Indians he always let them fight their own way; never attempting to do anything except encourage them by his presence and example. Leading white troops he observed the tactical methods then in vogue; but in woods-fighting was much more flexible in his generalship than British regular officers usually were.

On this point General Amherst once said to another British officer of high rank—General Gage—“We can all learn something from Johnson in the style of fighting we have to practice here!”

In the ordinary affairs of life he was sociable, free from pretension, easy in manner,

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decorous in speech, and temperate in all things. Singular as his domestic relations were for the greater part of his life, he was always devotedly attached to his home, and exceedingly fond of his Indian companions and of their half-breed children. In business matters he was shrewd, but invariably honest to a penny, and withal a generous creditor. His benevolence was proverbial, and no other man in the colonies during his time gave half as much in charity as he did. Though formally a member of the Church of England, he viewed other creeds with equal favor, and built several chapels for his Lutheran neighbors or tenants, besides mission school-houses for missionaries of other denominations than his own. He was not very strict in his own religious observances, but always insisted that his family—particularly his girls, white and half-breed alike—should be close Conformists in all the rites and ceremonies of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

His favorite pastimes were gunning, fishing, and horse-racing. He was in the habit of inviting the whole countryside either to Mount Johnson or Johnson Hall several times a year for all kinds of athletic sports, of which his own favorites were boxing and wrestling—at both of which, in his younger

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days, he was exceedingly expert and formidable. On one occasion a militia company in his own regiment, when electing officers, voted a tie for the position of second lieutenant. They appealed to him to decide. "Let them strip," he said, "and box it out. I want the best man to have the commission!"

On the whole and without further analysis, we think it clear that Sir William Johnson possessed a masterful mind, of quick intuitions and wide versatility; fertile in resource and keen in perception; prompt in decision and tremendously energetic in execution. Not, perhaps, amounting to what is rather indefinitely termed "genius," but well-balanced, steady, and safe.

There can be no doubt that Sir William's last years were made gloomy by the growing contentions and rapidly widening breach between the colonies and the mother country. Politically, he was an ardent Whig, and as such naturally opposed the policies of the Grenville and North ministries toward the colonies. But in his public utterances and in his correspondence at the time he was conservative to the point of being non-committal. In a letter to General Gage, dated September,



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1765, after deploring the "riotous conduct" of certain colonists, he says:

Having a large property to lose I cannot be supposed to think differently from the real interests of America; yet, as a lover of the British Constitution, I shall retain sentiments agreeable to it, although I should be almost singular [alone] in my opinion, and I have great reason to think that the late transactions and what is daily expected in other Colonies, will be productive of dangerous consequences. But I do not enter into their debates nor suffer myself to be led by artful constructions of the law.

A more significant expression occurs in a subsequent letter to Dr. Cadwallader Colden, where he uses the more epigrammatic, though still ambiguous, phrase: "For my part, I neither wish us here more power than we can make good use of, nor less liberty than we have a right to expect."

In another letter he "congratulates his correspondent on the repeal of the Stamp Act," and in another says: "Unless they alter the Stamp Act, we shall all be Republicans!"

General Schuyler, whom he visited at Albany in 1773, on the occasion of placing two of his half-breed daughters in a private seminary there, records him as "using language concerning the attitude of the ministry, and

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also its personal make-up, which I should have hesitated to use myself!" But Schuyler does not quote him—doubtless because it was a dinner-table conversation. In April, 1774, he visited New York city, and said to Philip Livingston, in the course of a friendly chat:

If the Colonies unite in revolt and the people are unanimous—or nearly so—in it, I do not believe the Crown can subdue them. The regular troops will find it very different if they have our Old Provincials against them instead of with them. I believe, notwithstanding the extreme lengths to which the troubles have proceeded, there is yet one chance left for reconciliation. But I fear it can never be accomplished by His Majesty's present advisers!

His last recorded utterance on the subject was early in July, 1774, not more than a week before his death. Dr. Wheelock was visiting him, as he habitually did during vacations. The doctor records him as saying:

All this trouble must lead to blows before long. A serious collision may happen any day now. The Colonists cannot retreat, and the King, apparently, will not. I am filled with forebodings. I dread the coming of a struggle that must shake the British Empire to its foundations. For my part I can only say now that I shall not be found on the side of the aggressor!

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Governor Seymour, who had seen the above in the Wheelock MSS. and copied it, interpreted it as a guarded declaration of intent to espouse the American cause, and invariably expressed the belief that he would have done so had he lived to hear the news from Bunker Hill.

The nearest approach to positive testimony that I have ever seen occurs in a statement made by Colonel Daniel Claus, Sir William's son-in-law, which has never before been published, so far as I know, and for a copy of which I am indebted to W. Max Reid, author of the History of the Mohawk Valley.

For brevity I may premise that after their defeat at Oriskany and the slaughter they suffered there, followed so closely by the surrender of Burgoyne, the Iroquois became deeply dejected, and many of them, particularly the Senecas and Cayugas, seriously contemplated neutrality, if not making terms with the American colonists and abandoning the British cause. This situation called forth all the resources of the great chief, Joseph Brant, to keep the Indians faithful to the king. On this subject Colonel Claus says:

Brant was ably seconded in his efforts by the tears and prayers of his sister Molly, who had been driven from her home at Danube by the enraged

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Americans after the battle of Oriskany. The Americans had not expelled Molly in 1776 at the time the Royalists were driven out, but had left her in peace at the Indian Castle at Danube, where she took up her residence with her family, when Sir John Johnson occupied Johnson Hall after the baronet's death.

Shortly after the battle of Oriskany the Americans found out that when St. Leger and Brant were besieging Fort Schuyler, Molly sent a message by an Indian runner warning Brant that a body of nearly a thousand Militia under General Herkimer were on the march to relieve the garrison of that Fort. She was then obliged to leave the Mohawk Valley, and she went for safety among the Five Nations, where she was assisted by her brother and the people, and among whom she took asylum. Every one of them pressed her to stay with them, but she fixed upon Cayuga as the center, and having relations among them by whom she was kindly received. After General Burgoyne's surrender she found them, in general, very fickle and wavering, particularly the Head Chief of the Senecas, Cayengorrahton, with whom she had a long conversation in council. She reminded the Chief of the great friendship between him and the late Sir William Johnson, whose name she could never mention without tears, which always greatly affect the Indians.

She told the Chief that she had often heard Sir William declare his fixed intention to live and

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die a firm adherent of the King of England and all his friends; together with other striking arguments, which had such an effect upon the Chief and other Sachems present that they promised henceforth truthfully to keep their engagements with her late friend the Baronet; for she is considered and esteemed by them as his relit, and one word from her would go further than a thousand from any white man whatever, because the white man must generally purchase the friendship of the Indians at a high rate. In fact they attached much more importance to her advice than even to that of her brother Joseph, whose prominence, zeal and activity rather occasioned envy and jealousy with many of the Indians.

It is fair to presume that Colonel Claus reported Molly's interview with the Seneca chief correctly. There might, perhaps, be some question as to Molly's own accuracy in quoting Sir William, or in the representations she made of his opinions and his decision. She was at that time undoubtedly in a most revengeful mood toward the Americans. She desired, above all things, that the Indians should remain true to the cause of the king. She realized that nothing but the success of the Royal cause could restore to her and her children the fortune bequeathed to them in Sir William's will. Under these conditions she may have been, and probably was,

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what the lawyers called an interesting witness.

Yet, if Sir William ever expressed any such views, she was quite as likely to hear them as any other person then living. It may be mentioned as a strange fact in connection with this matter, that neither Sir William's son, Sir John Johnson, nor his two sons-in-law, Colonel Claus and Guy Johnson, ever pretended to have heard him make any positive expression on the subject.

Whatever deductions we may draw from this conflicting testimony, one thing alone is certain: to the day of his death he held scrupulously aloof from the debates and the councils of both sides, taking no part whatever in the agitation; and he was invariably equally kind and hospitable to the Sons of Liberty, and to the officials of the Crown. If he had really made up his mind, he took his decision with him to the tomb.

For my own part, I venture no opinion. But it seems quite justifiable to say that had he lived and adhered to the American cause, the fate of the "Old New York Frontier," in respect to the warfare of Indians and Tories on the settlers, would have been vastly different from what it was; because the only man who could have swerved the Iroquois from



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their ancient covenant with the king was Sir William Johnson.

He died as he had lived—in harness. On the 11th of July, 1774, he made a long speech—nearly two hours—to about six hundred Indians, mostly Iroquois, who had assembled at Johnson Hall to invoke his influence to prevent the invasion of the Indian country on the Ohio known as “Dunmore’s War,” which culminated in the defeat and destruction of a considerable force of Indians—mostly from the Ohio tribes—under the chief, Cornstalk, by a superior army of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania frontiersmen under General Andrew Lewis at Point Pleasant—the confluence of the Ohio and Great Kanawha rivers.

He was at this time much weakened by dysentery, and exposure to an extremely hot sun, together with the excessive mental and physical strain of the long speech, brought on prostration by heat, which soon developed into cerebral apoplexy. He died at six o’clock P. M., July 11, 1774, about two hours after finishing his speech. His last words were spoken to Joseph Brant, who, with others, carried his limp form into the Hall. They were: “Joseph, control your people—control your people! I am going away!”

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These words, spoken to Brant in the Iroquois tongue, were echoed through every village of the Six Nations, from the Lower Mohawk Castle to Niagara. Unquestionably they, more than any other influence—or more than all other influences combined—caused the almost unanimous election of Brant to be grand sachem or senior chief of the Iroquois Confederacy not long afterward. The Indians interpreted the words to mean that Sir William, with his latest conscious breath, bequeathed his mantle to Joseph Brant, and the magic of his power over them was not impaired by death itself.

Sir John Johnson was at his home—the Mount—nearly ten miles away, when his father was stricken. An express sent by the hands of young William Johnson, the half-breed son, mounted on the fleetest horse in Sir William's racing-stable, reached Sir John about five o'clock—young William ruining the blooded horse he rode. Sir John instantly saddled his own best race-horse—an Irish steeplechaser named Royal Duke, the most valuable stallion then in the colonies—and covered nine miles of the distance in thirty minutes. The steeplechaser fell dead within a mile of Johnson Hall, and Sir John borrowed the horse of a farmer who hap-

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pened to be in the road when his own stallion fell, and soon arrived at the Hall. But his father, though still breathing, was unconscious, and in a few minutes passed away.

## APPENDIX

### WORKS CONSULTED

Life of Sir William Johnson . . .	William L. Stone.
Life of Sir William Johnson . . .	William E. Griffis.
Life of Sir William Johnson . . .	Claus.
Life of Sir William Johnson (Canadian). . .	Anon.
Life of Joseph Brant . . .	William L. Stone.
The Old New York Frontier . . .	Francis W. Halsey.
The Mohawk Valley . . .	W. Max Reid.
History of Herkimer County . . .	Benton.
History of Chenango County . . .	Anon.
History of Otsego County . . .	Anon.
History of the Five Nations . . .	Cadwallader Colden.
History of Herkimer County . . .	Beers.
A Voyage to North America, 1772 . . .	Peter Kalm.
Memoir of Rev. Dr. Wheelock . . .	McClure.
Dr. Wheelock's Narrative of the Indian School at Lebanon, Conn. . . .	Auto.
Settlement of the Genesee Country . . .	Williamson.
Gazetteer of New York State, 1821 . . .	Spofford.
Historical Gazetteer of New York, 1860 . . .	French.
History of Schoharie County . . .	Jephtha R. Simms.
Narrative of Mary Jemison . . .	Auto.
Life of Mary Jemison . . .	Seaver.
Annals of Tryon County . . .	Wm. W. Campbell.
Early Times on the Susquehanna . . .	Mrs. Perkins.
Montcalm and Wolfe . . .	Francis Parkman.
Pontiac's Conspiracy . . .	Ibid.
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